

2007 SPECIAL EDITION

Dateline

THE MOST DANGEROUS ASSIGNMENT

Reporters and photographers in Iraq have to dodge not only terrorists' bombs and bullets, but harassment and even lethal fire from our own military

INSIDE: WINNERS OF THE OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB AWARDS



They say things are
bigger in Texas.
Just look at the truck
we build there.



When you think Texas, chances are you think big. Which is why we've made San Antonio the home of the new full-sized Tundra, our biggest pickup truck yet.

The San Antonio plant, Toyota's 10th in the U.S., is a vital part of our U.S. operations. With a total of over 4,000 team member and on-site supplier jobs, it

represents a sizeable investment in the local community, bringing Toyota's total U.S. investment to over \$15 billion. Which is impressive, even by Texas standards.

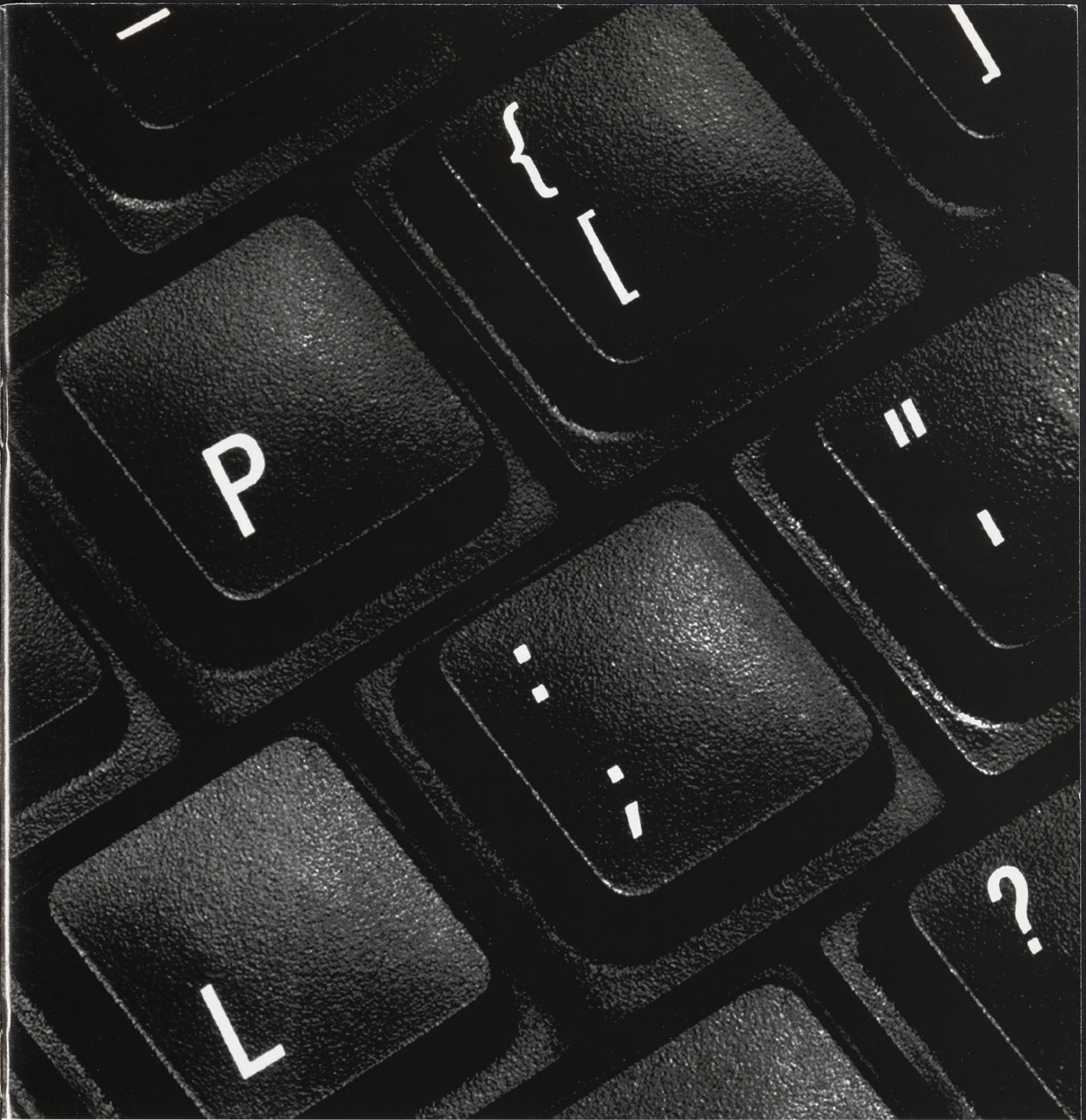
This new plant is just one more example of our commitment to America. It's what drives us to think big—about our vehicles and the people who drive them.

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Plants	10
Total Jobs	386,000**
Investment	\$15B



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Dateline

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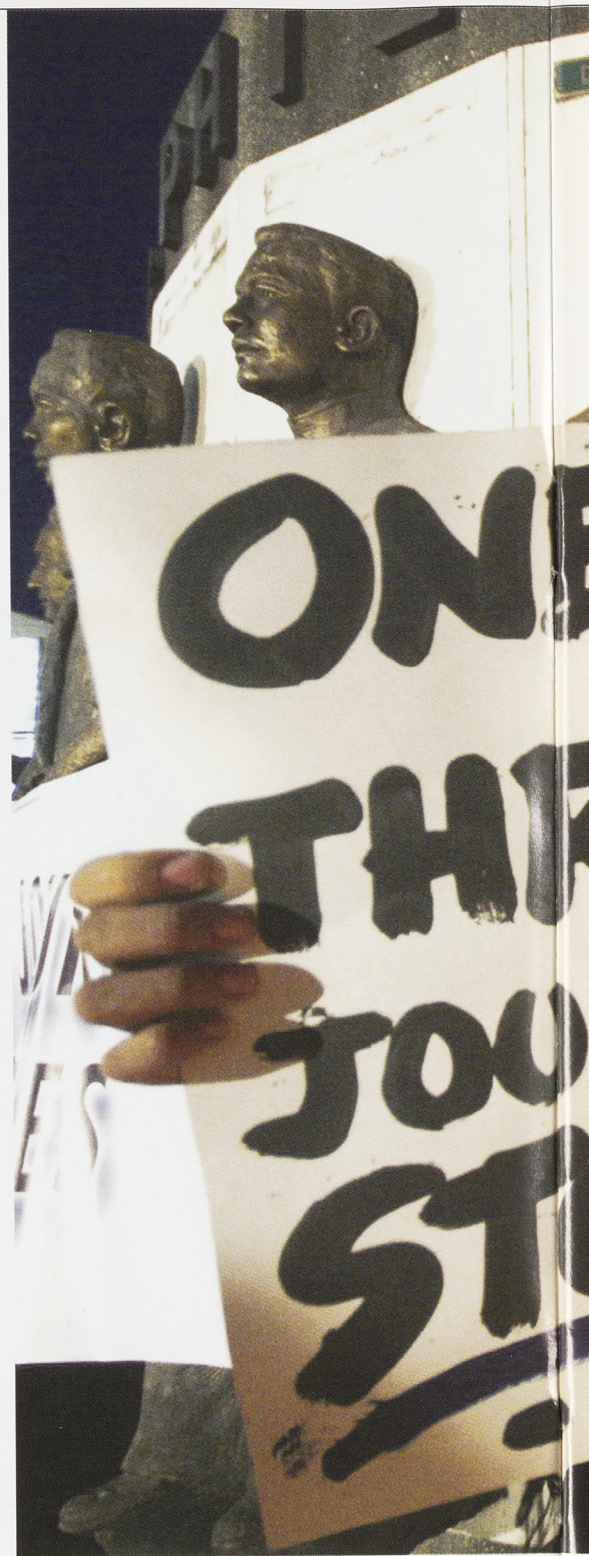
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Above: Members of the National Union of Journalists in the Philippines protest the rampant killing of their colleagues there.

PHOTO BY LUIS LIWANAG/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Cover: A Reuters photographer records a bombing in Sadr City that killed 35 laborers, among them the brother of the woman shown.

PHOTO BY KAREEM RAHEEM/REUTERS

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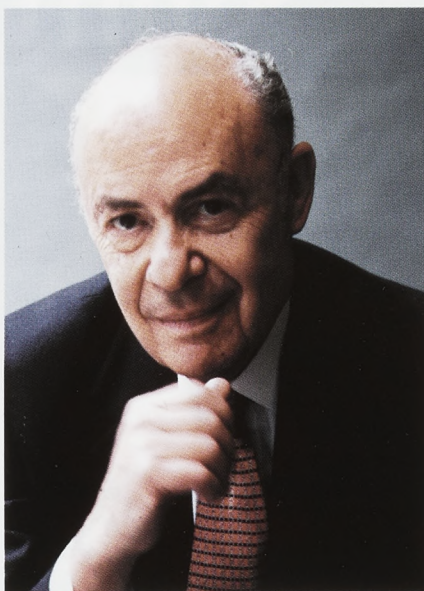
Letter from the President

A lot of the glam and the glory has gone out of covering the news from overseas.

Years ago, many of us went into this wonderful field because it was the best way to see the world. But now the media are in an ever-tighter era of mine-is-smaller-than-yours downsizings, buyouts and close-downs. Bureaus from Moscow to Beijing to Rio—not to mention Chicago and L.A.—are being shuttered. If you want to see the world, you join Goldman Sachs.

That's a pity because if there were ever a time when we needed to know our fast-changing, finely nuanced world, it is now. That is simply because our success, even our survival, depends on America's dealings with the rest of the world.

Yet despite these deficiencies, the surprising news is that journalism as a career is thriving. Just about every J-School dean I speak with reports that the quality of the student applicants has never been higher. Much the same is true of job applicants. "For us in the field, this is rather inspiring," says Mike Hoyt, executive editor of the *Columbia Journalism Review*.



If you really want to be inspired, go to the Overseas Press Club Foundation scholarship luncheon each February and hear the dozen smart, lively student winners tell of their hopes and dreams and the stories that they aim to tell, with the Foundation's help, from abroad.

Steve Shepard, dean of the ambitious new graduate School of Journalism at the City University of New York, says the brightest and best are still entering journalism because "they know there's a revolution under way, and they want to be part of it. They want to learn all the new tools of our trade—podcasting and video interactivity and blogging and citizen journalism and much more."

To which I can only add that if the new leaders of our profession are young people like that, plus the brave, creative, noble women and men who are

the winners of this year's Overseas Press Club Awards, we are in good shape.

And, oh yes, welcome to the revolution.

Marshall Loeb
President, Overseas Press Club

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The World of Nick Kristof

This year's main speaker at the OPC annual dinner is a man every reader of The New York Times, and millions of others, know from his provocative columns, written from every corner of the globe. Few know him more personally, however, than Naka Nathaniel, his multi-media web producer, and Winter Miller, his research assistant in New York. Below are their reflections on working every day with Nick.

The general opinion of Nicholas Kristof is that he's a humanitarian hounding genocidal governments, chasing down sex traffickers and kicking in the doors of nuns. More on the nun later. Nick's date-lines are indeed as exotic and hardscrabble as it gets. It's true, there's a part of Nick that wants to visit any place he's not yet been, not just to tell the story that hasn't been told, but because he's keeping a tally of every piece of foreign soil upon which he's set foot.

What the reader never sees is that in the field, Nick is a dogged reporter, unwilling to rest on his laurels as a long-time pro and go for the first story that fits the bill. It's his tenacity that has landed Nick a legion of admirers. Then again, it's that same tenacity that leaves him completely unaware of popular culture. This phone message is a favorite example.

Nick: Hey, Winter, I think this is a producer for CNN, he wants to talk about getting into Sudan, can you give him any information he needs. Thanks.

Voice Mail: Hi, this is George Clooney...

You'd expect nothing less from a man who's read thousands of U.N. reports and not a single issue of *Us Weekly*. The story behind the voice mail is that Nick was checking his voice mail at 4 a.m. in Pakistan while driving through the night after taking a detour to confront a brothel owner enslaving prostitutes.

In a world of armchair commentators, and bloggers looking for an easy link, Nick goes as far flung as his protagonists and heroes require. It has to do with Nick's concept of heroes—he's writing about some of the most oppressed and violated people on earth, and he manages to spotlight those who would otherwise remain voiceless.

How many reporters do you know who can tell you a story like that of Mamitu, an illiterate African peasant who was treated for a fistula and went on to become a surgeon and now treats hundreds of women suffering from this very curable, but off-ignored condition? How many reporters do you know who will buy trafficked sex slaves on his company dime?

Sure, sure, he then attempted to set the women up with NGO's to help them find a way out of what was initially forced prostitution. In the process, he saw first hand how intractable the problem of sex trafficking is in a world that doesn't value poor, uneducated young girls. Also, by taking a focused interest in these two young women, he put himself



CARING: Nick in a refugee camp in Chad.

on the line: to fail, to be criticized, all in the service of shaking readers awake concerning an international problem not in their backyards. Instead of being hard-boiled about it, Nick continued to stay involved in the lives of these two Cambodian women, Srey Neth and Srey Mom. He rejoiced when he saw good things happen to them, and ached when the specters of drugs and AIDS loomed larger than the good intentions of everyone involved.

A reporter of Nick's stature could fill his columns with interviews with presidents and kings. Instead he forces us to look directly into the face of humanity by seeing the heroism and the struggles of the most destitute, the least regarded, and the most oppressed. He has nothing to prove, but still he proves week after week he is deserving of his readers' attention.

Kicking in the nun's door? It's a true story, though not as salacious as you might think. The sister at Cabrini Mission in rural Swaziland had accidentally locked her door and misplaced the key. Nick tried non-violent means, but in the end the good sister asked him to use his foot to solve the problem. **OPC**

*Brave.
Creative.
Smart.*



CBS News congratulates Lara Logan
on her Overseas Press Club Award.

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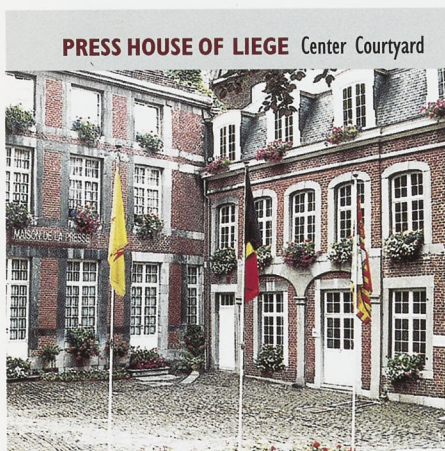
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Newsweek

FUEL FOR ACTIVE MINDS.

The Most Dangerous Assignment

Iraq-based reporters, photographers and cameramen risk their lives daily in the most dangerous war ever for journalists. They also must grapple with a suspicious U.S. military that has killed and imprisoned Iraqis employed by news organizations.

BY ALASTAIR MACDONALD

Reuters

The conflict in Iraq has produced extraordinary challenges for journalists. Most are the unavoidable consequences of war. But, as Reuters' outgoing Baghdad bureau chief Alastair Macdonald writes in this account of four years in Iraq, some problems are the regrettable consequence of behavior by the U.S. military that betrays the core values of its presence in the country. This must be addressed if the American public is to have a comprehensive view of events and if the troops are to fulfill the stated U.S. mission of defending freedom of expression.

The four years of the Iraq conflict have forced journalists to learn some new ways, and have reinforced our faith in some of the old ones. We've learned how best to use the facilities of embedding, a new form of an old style of war reporting offered by the U.S. armed forces. We've learned how to build fortresses around our newsrooms in Baghdad and to work with armed guards on an unprecedented scale. We have also been reminded that there is no substitute for being there. In a nation that is largely closed to foreigners

and where armed factions now target Iraqi journalists at will, killing over 100, we have had to train a new generation of local colleagues to work with us creatively to bring Iraqis' experiences to the outside world.

We have also had to struggle with the United States armed forces to defend the way we work, our staff and the very principle of our freedom to report independently. Four of Reuters' journalists have been killed by U.S. troops, four have been imprisoned for weeks or many months by the American military. Others have been arrested

for shorter periods, been beaten or had equipment confiscated. We have been accused in Washington of exaggerating the impact of violence and of lending support to America's enemies—enemies who in turn view us as their foe, and who have killed, kidnapped, tortured and intimidated those working for us, have murdered foreign journalists and launched elaborate suicide bomb attacks on our compounds in Baghdad.

Starting with the military's failure to accept any fault over the tank attack on the Palestine Hotel—Baghdad's unofficial wartime media center—on April 8, 2003, through four years of deaths, detentions and harassment, U.S. officials have displayed a mixture of apparent ignorance, complacency and weakness of command. That has undermined the dedicated work of thousands of other Americans and eroded the credibility of the U.S. government's claim that it is committed to the defense of media freedoms in Iraq. There is no suggestion that there is a U.S. policy of targeting journalists. But the lies and half-truths told and the attitudes revealed have damaged the wider credibility of U.S. official state-

ANGUISH An Iraqi stands amid the rubble at the site where a car bomb exploded Feb. 12 in central Baghdad, ripping through a popular Shi'ite market and killing at least 40 people.

PHOTO BY AHMAD AL-RUBAYE/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



ments. It has also set a poor example for the new Iraqi authorities, whose own short record of protecting freedom of speech is open to question.

No one disputes the difficulties the U.S. forces have faced in Iraq and the very real dangers troops face every day, making split-second, life-and-death decisions. Nor can one easily doubt the fundamental good intentions of the United States toward the concept of media freedom. And certainly, one must admire the sincere efforts of thousands of U.S. military personnel to aid journalists working in Iraq, often at the risk of their own lives. I've watched, with respect and gratitude, a Marine public affairs officer leap from cover to man a machinegun to defend a group of reporters caught in a roadside bomb attack. I've heard colleagues recount how the then-head of the Baghdad military press office ran towards the site of another bombing, pistol drawn, to protect them. Only in December, a second Marine public affairs officer became the highest-ranking woman killed in combat in Iraq while helping journalists in Ramadi.

And yet in that same city, every Iraqi journalist working for Reuters has been detained, some more than once, apparently on the flimsiest of evidence, before being released without charge. As I write, there are now no Ramadi journalists working for Reuters, because threats of renewed imprisonment have forced reporters to flee. When, in nearby Falluja, Reuters journalists were detained in early 2004 after being publicly accused of involvement in shooting down a U.S. helicopter, they were subjected to physical and verbal abuse of a kind that would later become familiar from the Abu Ghraib scandal. My predecessor as bureau chief was manhandled by a senior U.S. officer who demanded he drop a complaint about the incident.

On another occasion, the "evidence" that kept one Ramadi cameraman detained in Abu Ghraib and elsewhere for five months turned out to have been, from what we can determine, invented. The killing in 2004 of another Reuters cameraman in the city remains unexplained, the military refusing all requests to investigate how he was ap-

parently shot through the head by an American sniper—who should have been able to see he was holding not a weapon but a small handheld camera.

Two other Reuters journalists, Mazen Dana and Waleed Khaled, were shot dead in Baghdad by U.S. soldiers who said they could not tell a video camera from a grenade launcher. On neither occasion was any responsibility accepted by the military authorities, even though an independent report commissioned by Reuters found that the killing of Khaled in 2005 was "prima facie unlawful." Nor was any action taken, as far as we can tell, to avoid future incidents of this kind.

A brief history of Reuters' operations in Iraq over the past four years highlights the difficulties all media groups face. Based in London, Reuters is a leading provider of news, news photographs and television news footage to the world's media and to corporate subscribers and the Internet. We had already been a principal source of news from Iraq for decades when the war broke out in 2003. While some organizations heeded a warning from the Pentagon to leave Iraq, Reuters not only stayed, it expanded its operations, convinced of the need to tell both sides of the story. We had about 15 editorial staff based in Baghdad on March 20, 2003, and 20 reporters, photographers, television cameramen and producers embedded with U.S. and British forces, along with teams that entered the conflict zone in Iraq after the invasion from Kuwait and Iraqi Kurdistan.

The embeds provided vivid accounts and images of the race for Baghdad. Though there was criticism in some quarters that such proximity to the troops would distort the picture of the war, Reuters defended its decision to embed on the grounds that it should report from as many vantage points as possible. The combination of embeds and material from our other reporters inside and outside Iraq produced the most complete and balanced picture possible of the war.

Fears of embed censorship proved largely unfounded. The combination of satellite technology and field commanders' lack of time, or inclination, to oversee what correspondents and photographers were filing meant that, broadly speaking, what emerged from the embeds was an accurate, if worm's eye, view of the war from the Ameri-

INJURED Reuters photographer Thair al Sudani runs alongside as a bombing victim is given assistance. Iraqi photographers and cameramen have repeatedly been arrested and shot by U.S. soldiers.

PHOTO BY REUTERS





GRIEF Friends, relatives and colleagues of Reuters soundman Waleed Khaled at his funeral procession in 2005. He was killed in a hail of U.S. bullets; Reuters is still awaiting the conclusion of a military probe.

PHOTO BY CEERWAN AZIZ / REUTERS

can side. To this day the embedding system has by and large been a positive addition to media organizations trying to get across a full picture of what is happening in Iraq, although there have been cases where journalists have said they were expelled from units where commanders took exception to their reports. Reporters have also been surprised by new requests for examples of previous work before embed places are granted.

In Baghdad during the invasion, despite an atmosphere of intimidation from Saddam Hussein's Ministry of Information minders, there was little attempt to prevent news being transmitted of the damage inflicted on the city. By early April 2003, following the destruction of news bureaus in the Information Ministry building in an air strike, most foreign journalists were based in the Palestine Hotel. Through-

out the war, news organizations passed on details of their staffs' positions to the Pentagon. Yet on April 8, a U.S. missile struck the offices of Al Jazeera television, killing one journalist and wounding another. Then a U.S. tank fired a shell at the Palestine Hotel. It struck the fifteenth floor balcony being used by Reuters, fatally wounding my colleague Taras Protsyuk, a Ukrainian, and José Couso, a cameraman for Spain's Tele 5 who was on the balcony below. Three other Reuters staff were wounded.

Initially, U.S. military spokesmen said the tanks had come under fire from the hotel, something not corroborated by any of the dozens of journalists working there that morning. A journalist embedded with the unit that fired the shell later said its commander was furious with his subordinates for firing on the hotel, a landmark on the

Tigris riverbank. Subsequent official accounts said the troops were targeting an Iraqi artillery "spotter." No one in the U.S. chain of command was found responsible.

Four months later, our Palestinian colleague Mazen Dana, a much-acclaimed veteran of the conflict in his native West Bank, was shot dead by an American soldier near Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison. Again we were distressed by the U.S. military response. Though Dana was filming in the street with the knowledge and permission of a U.S. unit at the scene, a soldier on a tank which drove up later fired on Dana with his rifle without warning. A military inquiry found no fault. Subsequent appeals by Reuters for a fuller investigation and for a public clarification of the Army's classified rules of engagement met with refusal in Washington.



CONTROVERSY Mourners at the burial of some 20 Iraqis killed in a U.S. air strike on a village northwest of Baghdad. The military says they killed terrorists; villagers say they were innocent civilians.

PHOTO BY DIA HAMID/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The end of the initial phase of the war brought a new journalism to Iraq. Reuters dispatched seasoned journalists across the country to recruit Iraqi "stringers." It wasn't easy. For those of us with experience of the opening up of eastern Europe in the 1990s, there was a striking contrast. The Communist bloc had plenty of trained journalists only too ready to work without state censorship. In Iraq, there simply were very few journalists at all, especially in the provinces.

The youth of the country stepped in to help. Enthusiastic students and wedding photographers, shopkeepers, lawyers and professional translators, even in one case a young barber with an eye for the news and a way with a video camera, have become Reuters journalists. In four years, many have become among the best we have. The basic concept of reporting what you see and hear, sticking to the facts you can back up and capturing images available to anyone with the skill and

nerve to stand on the street and film them has, once again, proved to be universal.

In the summer of 2003, the new Reuters bureau in a villa in downtown Baghdad put up its first concrete blast walls in the wake of the suicide truck bomb attack on the United Nations offices in Iraq. At that point the agency was already employing the bulk of its current 70 or so Iraqi reporters, photographers and cameramen, about half in Baghdad and the rest in more than 20

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CAR BOMB Baghdad residents examine the wreckage after an explosion at the Shorja market killed 60 people.

PHOTO BY WATHIQ KHUZAIE / GETTY IMAGES

other cities. Backed by half a dozen foreigners working in Baghdad, they are the mainstays of a daily file that today averages over a dozen individual stories, many updated throughout the day, several dozen photographs and five to ten minutes of video.

For a year and a half or so after the invasion, foreigners continued to get about. But by 2004, many of us had spent uncomfortable moments or hours detained by gunmen on the highways around Falluja and Ramadi or on the road south to Najaf. And when al Qaeda began routinely kidnapping foreigners and videotaping their killing, including journalists like the Italian Enzo Baldoni, virtually all movement outside Baghdad came to an end. Even travel

inside the city entailed the use of discreet armored limousines, armed guards and the formation of media convoys for those organizations able to afford them.

In late 2005, multiple suicide car bomb attacks on the Palestine and Hamra hotels, both major centers for the foreign media in Baghdad, served as a reminder of the unrelenting hostility of some militant groups to independent journalism. The broken windows in our own bureau and the slab of hot metal that landed in our yard from the cement truck that came close to demolishing the nearby Palestine Hotel prompted yet more defensive construction around our compound. Travel restrictions were also reinforced last year

after the kidnapping of American journalist Jill Carroll.

For the Iraqis who continue to provide the bulk of images and reporting from the streets, the risks have also done nothing but increase, notably in the sectarian violence that has spiraled since the destruction of the Shiites' Samarra shrine a year ago. Journalists are also at risk from the U.S. armed forces. In January 2004, three Iraqis working for Reuters were arrested in Falluja, along with an employee of NBC. They were apparently suspected of shooting down a U.S. helicopter. The military spokesman said "enemy personnel posing as media" had fired on U.S. troops. Though their status as journalists was confirmed to the mili-

tary by Reuters within hours, it took three days to obtain their release.

Once back in Baghdad, they recounted details of their treatment, which included physical and emotional abuse by American soldiers. Among the degrading acts, one was forced to insert his finger into his anus and then lick it. In response to a complaint from Reuters, the military agreed to investigate. Some months later, however, the matter was ruled closed without any officer questioning the journalists who were detained or any other Reuters staff. The report, compiled by a field officer from the same division involved in the incident, was never released. Though the scandal over the treatment of prisoners at Abu Ghraib had by then broken, revealing similar humiliating practices, in May 2004 the U.S. commander in Iraq, Lieutenant General Ricardo S. Sanchez, said the investigation into the abuse at Falluja was "thorough." As far as Reuters is aware, no other action was ever taken.

A similar unwillingness to cooperate with media employers was evident after

the death of Reuters cameraman Dhia Najim in Ramadi in November of 2004. An initial U.S. military statement said he was shot dead during clashes between insurgents and U.S. troops. When video evidence and statements from local witnesses suggested that he was killed—by a single shot to the head—during a lull in the fighting, Reuters asked for clarification of the activities of American snipers. The military made no further response to requests for information.

Reuters remains troubled about the extent to which U.S. soldiers are trained to identify journalists on the battlefield. If Najim was killed by a sniper, as seems the most likely explanation, it is hard to understand how anyone firing at him could not have seen that he was holding a small palm-held camera, not a weapon. Also troubling have been occasional candid remarks by U.S. officers that "enemy propaganda" is a legitimate target.

In the weeks after Najim was killed,

the major offensive against Sunni insurgents in nearby Falluja was to highlight the dangers for Americans fighting in Iraq as well as both positives and negatives in the relationship between the U.S. forces and the media. Reporters found themselves as close to combat as most would ever want to be. The access given by U.S. commanders also provided a cameraman a view of a Marine shooting dead an apparently wounded man lying in a mosque. Those images prompted controversy, and anger among American troops, some of whom accused the cameraman of betraying a trust. U.S. commanders, however, stood by the principle of embedding journalists at the front. They later also exonerated the Marine of any wrongdoing in the killing of three men.

As with the invasion 18 months earlier, U.S. officials had urged all non-combatants to leave Falluja. Reuters was one of the few media organizations with an Iraqi correspondent calling in copy from inside the besieged city. The difficulty some U.S. com-

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ARREST Distraught family members look on as soldiers take into custody a Shia man suspected of involvement in sectarian violence in a village in Diyala province.

PHOTO BY SHAWN BALDWIN / CORBIS

manders have had in understanding the importance to our credibility of covering the conflict from all sides was highlighted by a military news release of Nov. 28, 2004, that appeared to accuse Reuters staff of supplying an "insurgent TV studio" in Falluja. In 19 pages of maps and photographs of equipment at the site found by Marines, the military highlighted that much of the equipment was marked as the property of Reuters, as well as of Associated Press Television News.

Though the statement made no

specific allegation against the agencies, only after it had been shown to embedded journalists in Falluja did the Pentagon contact Reuters editors to suggest that Reuters staff had provided equipment and services for "insurgent broadcasts." Reuters' response prevented the wider distribution of the statement. In fact, the studio was a broadcast transmission point used by Reuters and other agencies to send video footage from Falluja by satellite to production desks elsewhere. It was run by an independent Turkish company which had on

several occasions before the offensive informed the U.S. military of its location. It was disconcerting that the Turkish company's information had not reached commanders on the ground, and that U.S. forces hastily assumed that an independent media operation inside Falluja must be hostile. No apology was made and the equipment seized was never returned.

The presence of journalists after violent incidents has been a constant source of suspicion and misunderstanding among the military, whose of-

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People



ON GUARD

A soldier with a prisoner in Diyala province in February.

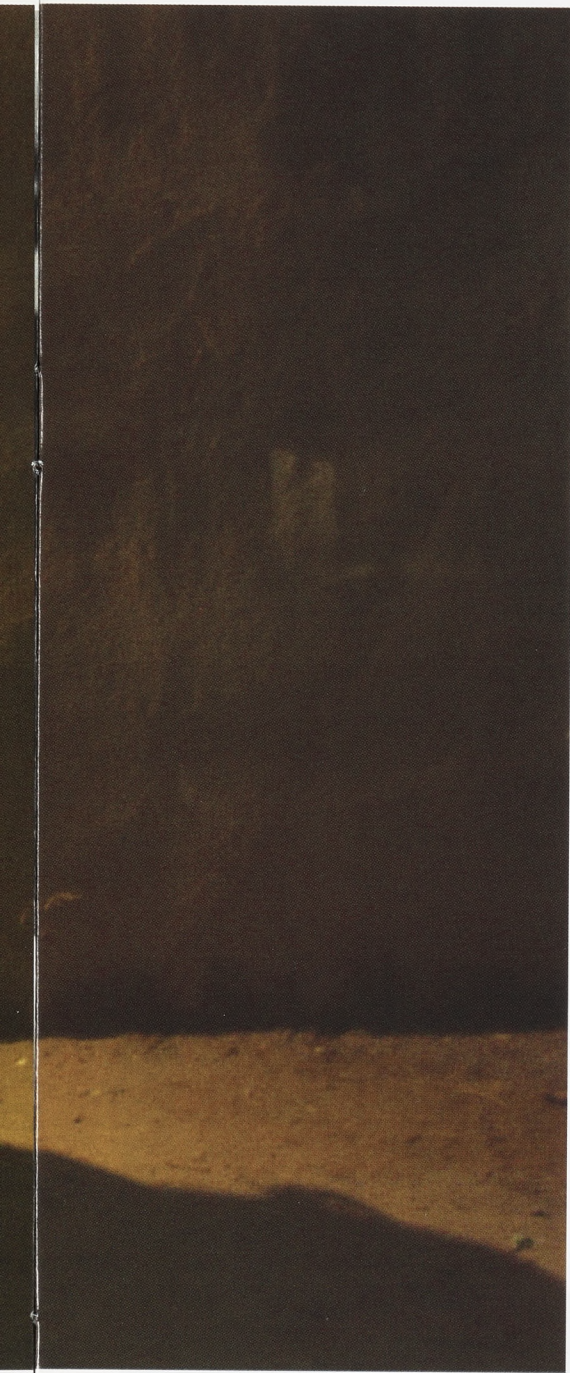
PHOTO BY SHAWN BALDWIN/CORBIS

Officers have repeatedly asserted that their swift arrival at the scene implies foreknowledge. By 2004 we had become used to cameramen and photographers being briefly detained at such scenes, and sometimes having film or other equipment confiscated. But the problem became much more severe in

2005, when a number of journalists were detained for several months. By October of that year, three Reuters journalists, as well as several working for other international media groups, were in long-term custody, though not charged.

The U.S. command refused to rec-

ognize any special status for journalists. We argued that it is the nature of our work to be present during times of conflict and to maintain professional contact with all parties to it. A U.S. general insisted, however, that journalists falling under any suspicion would be treated like any other Iraqi and re-



fused to accept that an accredited journalist might have more justification for filming violence than someone who is not. Only following the release in January last year of our three employees, after seven, five and three months respectively in Abu Ghraib and elsewhere, did the U.S. military command

agree that, in future, questions about journalists' activities would be given fast-track treatment involving their employers. That has not, however, stopped local commanders arresting three Reuters journalists in the year since and holding them for up to two weeks—mostly, it seems, in efforts to extract information.

The detentions of 2005 highlighted the vulnerability of Iraqi journalists. One TV cameraman working for Reuters was detained for seven months solely on the basis of a vague denunciation from an Iraqi officer. This happened even though the U.S. military and the Iraqi government itself acknowledge that Iraqi forces are in part manned by sectarian militiamen. The discovery of electronic equipment at the cameraman's home was also held against him, even though a U.S. general later accepted that it was equipment likely to be used by a photojournalist. Nothing came of Reuters' requests for an investigation into the fact that he was beaten unconscious on the day of his arrest.

Ten months after he was released without charge, the cameraman was arrested again and held for two weeks by U.S. troops who demanded he denounce "terrorists" he knew—though he insisted he knew none. The Iraqi troops in charge of the prison where he was held tortured one of his cellmates nightly. The man died.

Another cameraman was arrested in Ramadi in August 2005. The evidence against him included that he was seen running away during clashes. He was an unarmed cameraman prudently taking cover. The troops also told military investigators they found images on his camera that they said showed he had been "pre-positioned" to film an attack. However, months later, when I was finally able to question a senior U.S. officer responsible for the case, he told me those images had been "destroyed at the scene." In other words, they may well never have existed. That cameraman was also taunted by a junior American soldier after his arrest that troops had orders to shoot anyone with a camera spotted during clashes. Senior officers denied there was any such policy. Nonetheless, one interrogator told the third Reuters reporter detained in 2005: "Every time you report an attack on the Americans, it's a shot in the arm for the insurgents."

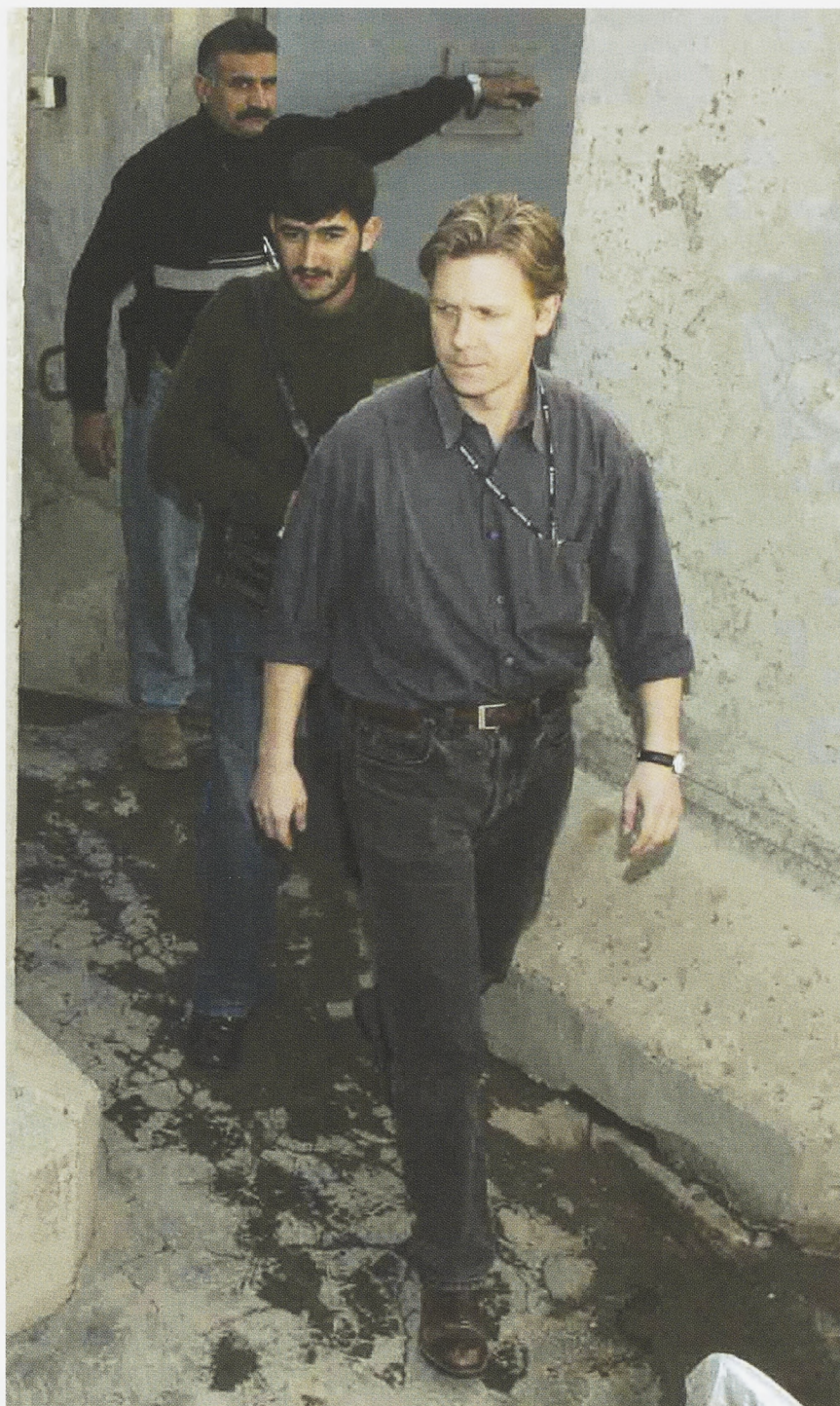
No journalist working for foreign media in Iraq has, to my knowledge,

been successfully prosecuted. A U.S.-sponsored Iraqi court threw out for lack of credible evidence the case against a CBS cameraman who had been held for a year. The military have declined to prosecute an AP photographer who has been held for the past year, though they still refuse to state the grounds for his detention or to charge him. Military officials have often cited the confidentiality of intelligence as a reason for not explaining to employers why their staff have been held. Yet the experience of Reuters and other media groups has been that when they have been given access to "evidence," it has been flimsy, flawed or nonexistent. As one general told me: "This is not a legal process." That's an alarming statement to be coming from forces whose stated intent in Iraq is to bring about the rule of law.

The military often question how foreign media organizations "vet" Iraqi staff. The ability of any organization working in Iraq to carry out such procedures with any reliability is extremely limited, but we do have confidence in our ability to get to know our journalists intimately over years of daily contact. Moreover, our more experienced international staff, many of them Arabs, have a keen eye and ear for colleagues who might be pursuing a personal agenda. The process in Iraq is no different from, though probably more rigorous than, that used by editors around the world, who subject journalists' work and attitudes to constant scrutiny for integrity and adherence to professional principles. We have a proven record over 150 years for imbuing Reuters journalists with principles of accuracy, speed and freedom from bias. And we subject every story and image to a rigorous editing process.

But that has counted for little, it seems, with many U.S. commanders. As one senior Pentagon official told me last year, the problem at Reuters is that we employ so many "indigenous people" in Iraq. Even were it possible to dispatch experienced Western news crews onto the streets of Baghdad, the use of locals is fundamental to the ability to report accurately and with insight, wherever we operate. Most of Reuters' 2,400 journalists, whether American or British or Zimbabwean, are working in their native countries.

The process of educating the mili-



AT WORK Macdonald leaving Reuters' bunker-like bureau in Baghdad. Western news bureaus have been the object of unremitting attacks.

PHOTO BY REUTERS

tary authorities about the nature of our work continues. There have been encouraging signs, with Pentagon officials asking for input on our procedures so that these can be incorporated into training programs for troops.

Yet for the past year, Reuters has also been pressing the Pentagon to reopen an inquiry into the killing of our soundman/driver Waleed Khaled. This follows the findings of an independent report, commissioned by

Reuters, that concluded that the shooting was "prima facie unlawful" and the U.S. military's initial investigation into it deeply flawed. The death of Khaled and the arrest of the cameraman who was with him and who narrowly survived when their car was hit by 17 bullets in August 2005, remains for me one of the most disturbing incidents of my four years covering Iraq. The unit that opened fire then searched the car and found no weapons—only two Reuters journalists, one dead, one living. If any investigation into a possible crime was required, an outsider might assume it was into how an unarmed man had just been killed. Instead, it was the survivor who was arrested, despite the presence by that time at the scene of a senior American correspondent for Reuters, who confirmed his Iraqi colleagues' identity. The cameraman was then interrogated for three days.

Though I was able to vouch for having dispatched the pair to film an incident, reported to us by the Iraqi police, in which a police patrol had been ambushed, U.S. military interrogators held and questioned our traumatized cameraman as a suspected insurgent. A U.S. general initially said publicly that Khaled had been shot as he approached a U.S. position, driving fast and erratically with his passenger hanging out of the window holding what appeared to be a weapon. The U.S. military's written report on the incident, later provided to Reuters in a redacted form, included statements from the four soldiers who opened fire, confirming other testimony that the car was in fact moving in reverse—standard procedure for news crews to show they have no hostile intent—and that the suspected weapon was not visible when the shots were fired.

The soldiers also said they were not sure the passenger was holding a weapon. A former investigator with the British military police reviewed at Reuters' request the U.S. investigative report, written by a major from the unit involved who concluded that the soldiers' actions were "appropriate." The independent investigator working for The Risk Advisory Group questioned why the soldiers were not cross-examined. He also criticized the way in which crucial evidence—the Reuters video of the incident—was "lost" by the investigating officer. He concluded that the troops had broken their rules of engagement for responding to apparent

hostile intent. Although the acting inspector general of the Department of Defense agreed last April to take up Reuters' request for a further inquiry, we are still waiting for the conclusion of that review.

Iraq's further descent toward all-out civil war has greatly increased other risks for journalists there. All are subject to the dangers faced by all Iraqis—everyone in our newsroom has suffered from deaths and kidnappings in their immediate circle. Two of our staff came within yards of suicide bombers last year and many were fired on while working. Sectarian and ethnic violence has forced many journalists simply to stop covering key cities, notably Mosul in the north, where the former driver for our now departed news crew was shot dead outside his home in January. Intimidation is commonplace.

Reuters has been publicly condemned by various armed factions for favoring one side or the other. Getting the facts straight amid a daily welter of conflicting accounts gets no

easier. The new Iraqi government, clearly frustrated by its inability to rein in the violence, can be highly critical of news coverage. It has banned several television channels. In my final week running our Baghdad bureau, a typical one, I had to deal with the kidnappings of a cameraman and photographer by Sunni insurgents in Baquba and the pistol-whipping of our correspondent in the Shiite city of Najaf by an Iraqi policeman. The journalists who were kidnapped were eventually released, but not before a menacing grilling by their death squad captors about their work as journalists. Two other victims of the group were taken out and shot.

There may be little the United States can do about such problems for the media today. But it should be setting an example. The U.S. military has done much to cultivate good relations with the international media, opening itself to candid outside inquiry through embeds and a vast force of public affairs officers throughout the services. Yet in failing to prevent field comman-

ders from pursuing Iraqi journalists in a process that looks very much like harassment, and in failing to examine transparently and frankly, even within its own clear security constraints, the mistakes of its own troops in killing journalists in Iraq, it has left itself exposed to the criticism that it is not sincere in its stated aim of defending media freedoms. **OPC**

Alastair Macdonald joined Reuters in 1990 after editing a financial magazine in London. He covered economics in Paris from 1991 and then spent four years in Moscow reporting on politics from across the former Soviet Union, including the war in Chechnya. He was chief political correspondent in Germany from 1999 and later a senior editor in London. After editing special coverage of the invasion of Iraq, he made several reporting trips there from 2003 until becoming bureau chief in Baghdad in June 2005. He takes up a new post as bureau chief in Jerusalem in April.

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THE AFRICAN SCOURGE Maria Vindi, who is HIV-positive, prays with her mother and a volunteer, Forget Gutuza, in Zimbabwe.

By Kathleen Hunt and Larry Martz, Co-chairs, Awards Committee

In a time when America's media show a weak and dwindling commitment to reporting the wider world, the sheer excellence of this year's Overseas Press Club award winners testifies to the courage, enterprise and compassion of the journalists who are still on the job.

If there is a common theme in these works, it's the world's human face. War, whether in Iraq, Afghanistan or Sri Lanka, isn't just smart bombs, tanks and explosions. It is soldiers under fire and being treated for their wounds, an anguished family hunkered down in a house, the disintegration of neighborhoods, and a study of the counterinsurgency that might have been, had the tactics been more humane.

We view in photographs and hear in an extraordinary radio series the real impact of AIDS on Africans. We see the international sex traffic from the perspective of all those involved, including the trafficker, and we

feel the horror of parasitic diseases that could and should have been wiped out years ago. On compelling TV, Peruvians relive their decades of fear in the vise between terrorist rebels and a repressive government.

But just as compelling as the human story is the straightforward reporting – on Internet censorship and environmental devastation in China, on the degradation of the world's oceans, on the \$250 billion global torrent of cash from immigrant workers to their families back home, and on the hidden workings of “extraordinary rendition.” This year's awards are a tribute to world-class journalism at its best.

We are grateful to the award sponsors, and to the more than 75 judges who read, viewed, listened to and argued over this year's 510 entries. We applaud the winners. But we also celebrate the high and rising quality of the competition as a whole. Overseas journalism has never been better; we wish only that there could be more of it.

1. The Hal Boyle Award

Best newspaper or wire service reporting from abroad

Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES TIMES STAFF

Los Angeles Times

"Coverage of War on Two Fronts"

At a time when many news organizations are under pressure to cut back on their international presence, the judges were impressed by the depth of commitment made by the *Los Angeles Times* to cover two of the world's most difficult and dangerous stories. The *Times* maintained three full-time correspondents in Baghdad, backed by more than 20 Iraqi staffers. The correspondents were ahead of the competition in describing the disintegration of Sunni-Shiite neighborhoods and the role of Shiite police in death squads. In Afghanistan, Paul Watson displayed remarkable enterprise by describing how secret information was leaking out of a U.S. military base and by traveling nearly 1,400 miles around the country.

CITATIONS

C.J. CHIVERS

The New York Times

"With the Marines"

ANTHONY SHADID

The Washington Post

"The Contest for Lebanon"

2. The Bob Considine Award

Best newspaper or wire service interpretation of international affairs

PAUL SALOPEK

Chicago Tribune

"A Tank of Gas, A World of Trouble"



They said it couldn't be done—trace a gallon of gas sold in America to the oil producing countries from which it came. Paul Salopek thought otherwise. Learning that refineries kept "crude slates," he convinced Marathon Oil to share the confidential list of crude deliveries at its Illinois refinery. In a series that crackles with verisimilitude, Salopek depicts both life in the oil fields of the strife-torn African states that produced the crude, and life among the truckers, Hummer drivers and down and outs at an all night Marathon station vending the final product on Chicago's West side. Salopek's effort is a model of how to plant a global story squarely on Main Street.

CITATION

MICHAEL MOSS

The New York Times

"The Iraq Court System:
Law and Disorder"

3. The Robert Capa Gold Medal Award

Best published photographic reporting from abroad requiring exceptional courage and enterprise

PAOLO PELLEGRIN

Magnum for *Newsweek*

"True Pain: Israel & Hizbullah"



The judges found Pellegrin's startling pictures to be haunting in their vision of the war and its victims. Based primarily in the southern Lebanese city of Tyre and enduring the dangers of intense Israeli shelling and bombardment, Pellegrin photographed the damage, death, and internal displacement of a country ravaged by conflict. His photographs of the anxieties and terrors of war are universal images. They are full of austere beauty even as they tell a damning truth about the brutal nature of armed conflict and its terrible effects on civilian populations.

4. The Olivier Rebbot Award

Best photographic reporting from abroad in magazines or books

Q. SAKAMAKI

Redux - *Newsweek*

"Sri Lanka: War Without End"



The judges all agreed that Sakamaki's comprehensive visual report of the civil war in Sri Lanka, which includes work with both Tamil and Sri Lankan fighters as well as powerfully cathartic images of civilian casualties and refugees, told the most poignant story in the competition. By defining the brutal contours of the conflict, Sakamaki has evoked the emotional and deadly trauma of a savage civil war that has raged for nearly 25 years and has all but been forgotten by the outside world.

5. The John Faber Award

Best photographic reporting from abroad in newspapers or wire services

KRISTEN ASHBURN

Contact Press Images -
Los Angeles Times
"The African Scourge"



The jury felt that Kristen Ashburn's "The African Scourge" stood out among some very strong entries. Her story on AIDS in Africa showed an understanding, compassion, dedication and warmth for her subjects. This created an emotional response from the members of the jury and was key to her selection as the winner. In her photographs Ashburn allowed her subjects to speak rather than the photographs or the situation.

6. Feature Photography Award

Best feature photography published in any medium on an international theme

FARAH NOSH

Getty Images - *Time*
"The Other Side of War"



Farah Nosh's project, "The Other Side of War," presents a rare and intimate glimpse into the private life of an Iraqi family in Baghdad. In startling contrast to the typical media portrayal of Iraqis as either victims or combatants, Nosh presents her subjects as ordinary people, in moments of shelter from the war raging outside the walls of their home. The judges found her work to be extraordinary, not only for the unique perspective she brings to the subject, but for the poignancy and eloquence of her visual language.

7. The Lowell Thomas Award

Best radio news or interpretation of international affairs

JOE RICHMAN

Radio Diaries and National Public Radio
"Thembi's AIDS Diary"



This is a compelling account of a young woman's fight against the pandemic that is sweeping Africa. Thembi Ngubane, a resident of the sprawling South African township of Khayelitsha, spent a year recording her feelings about the disease, her fears about having a child of her own and the pain of telling her father about her illness. The judges felt that this was an example of radio at its finest: powerful, creative and deeply moving. Superb editing, which compacted 50 hours of raw tape into a half-hour documentary, allowed Thembi to tell her own story while simultaneously illustrating the political and social tensions roused by AIDS in a nation still trying to overcome the legacy of its apartheid past.

CITATION

RENEE MONTAGNE
JIM WILDMAN
BRUCE AUSTER
National Public Radio
"Afghanistan Five Years Later"

8. The David Kaplan Award

Best TV spot news reporting from abroad

LARA LOGAN, JEFF NEWTON,
MAX McCLELLAN,
ROME HARTMAN, BILL OWENS,
TOM McENENY

CBS Evening News
"Ramadi Embed"



Judges noted Logan's "immensely powerful storytelling" in her coverage of American troops under fire in Ramadi. Logan was running along with troops when a 19-year old soldier was shot right in front of her. Logan caught several signs of imminent disaster seconds before snipers opened fire: women suddenly running away down the street, shops abandoned with all of their goods openly on display. Judges were especially impressed by Logan's capturing of many human moments and gritty details as the young troops faced possible death. Some of their comments as bullets were hitting around them: "we're going to get blown up," and "we're just rolling the dice."

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PAOLO PELLEGRIN

THE ROBERT CAPA GOLD MEDAL AWARD

MAGNUM for NEWSWEEK

"TRUE PAIN: ISRAEL AND HIZBULLAH"

Volunteers remove a victim from
the debris in the aftermath of
a bombing in Lebanon in July,
during the short and brutal war there.

9. The Edward R. Murrow Award

Best TV interpretation or documentary on international affairs

RIC ESTHER BIENSTOCK
FELIX GOLUBEV
SIMCHA JACOBOWICI
DAVID FANNING
KEN DORNSTEIN

Associated Producers for PBS—Frontline
 "Sex Slaves"

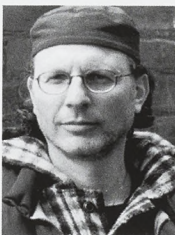
"Sex Slaves" represents everything a winner should have: strong dramatic story, riveting characters, amazing access, good journalism, and professional execution. This portrait of modern day slavery is made possible by the most compelling use of undercover cameras in recent memory. The international scourge of human trafficking is shown from all sides—the women, their families, the middlemen (who sometimes were women) and the traffickers themselves. The disappearance of Katia and her husband Viorel's desperate search to trace and rescue her from Turkey is the stuff of movie scripts. The fact that Katia's kidnapper, Vlad, agrees to talk about and justify his crime is a coup for the filmmakers that serves to highlight the enormous difficulty of stamping out this ancient but still thriving crime against humanity. Bravo to the filmmakers for their first-rate reporting and forceful storytelling worthy of the name Murrow.



BIENSTOCK



GOLUBEV



JACOBOWICI

10. The Ed Cunningham Award

Best magazine reporting from abroad

GEORGE PACKER

The New Yorker
 "The Lessons of Tal Afar"

Packer writes a brilliant overview and analysis of a failed American counter-insurgency effort in Iraq by focusing on a successful stand-alone operation. Reporting from Tal Afar and Washington, he distills the essence of one effort to pacify Iraq, while lamenting that, in general, it is a road not taken by American political and military leaders. Packer's story features superb writing and on-the-scene reporting. He describes the failed policies which have emboldened U.S. enemies and divided American public opinion. His piece could have been entitled "The Anatomy of a Catastrophe."



CITATION

RON MOREAU and SAMI YOUSAFZAI
Newsweek
 "Resurgence of the Taliban"

11. The Thomas Nast Award

Best cartoons on international affairs

SIGNE WILKINSON

Philadelphia Daily News

With her edgy characters and tart taglines, Signe Wilkinson never fails to surprise. Whether she is skewering the Bush White House for its Iraq policy or the repressive Chinese regime's crackdown on the Internet, Wilkinson amuses, informs and enlightens.



CITATION

KEVIN (KAL) KALLAUGHER
The Economist

12. The Morton Frank Award

Best business reporting from abroad in magazines

CLIVE THOMPSON

The New York Times Magazine
 "Google's China Problem
 (And China's Google Problem)"



The explosive growth of Google was one of the biggest stories of the year. But in the case of China, this growth came at significant cost to Google's reputation, as the internet giant agreed to submit to official censorship. Clive Thompson traveled twice to China and conducted hard-to-get on-the-record interviews to explore whether Google betrayed its own credo (Don't be evil). Thompson's detailed account added context, depth, and dimension to a story that had played out in the news over weeks. He showed that China, too, bore a cost for letting Google in. Ultimately, he offered unparalleled insights into the way in which a company and a country rewrote the rules of global business.

CITATIONS

MICHAEL SMITH and DAVID VOREACOS
Bloomberg Markets
 "Secret World of Modern Slavery in South America"

DEXTER ROBERTS and PETE ENGARDIO

BusinessWeek
 "Secrets, Lies, and Sweatshops"

13. The Malcolm Forbes Award

Best business reporting from abroad in newspapers or wire services

Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES TIMES STAFF

Los Angeles Times

"The New Foreign Aid"

The *Los Angeles Times* five-part series focused on the extensive phenomenon known as remittances – whereby immigrants working abroad send money to their families in their home countries. This \$250 billion global ritual accounts for the fastest growing and most reliable source of income for developing countries. Every day remittances are flowing not just to Mexico from California, but from Italy to Kenya, Spain to Ecuador, South Africa to Zimbabwe, and from just about everywhere to the Philippines. The *Times* brought the stories to life by recounting the sometimes harrowing experiences of individuals on both ends of the remittance pipeline. Proving that commitment to foreign news is not dead, the *Times* sent its reporters to 14 countries to tell the compelling stories of remittances – the new foreign aid.

CITATIONS

DAN FITZPATRICK

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
"Wild Wild East"

CHIP CUMMINS

The Wall Street Journal
"The Global Energy-Security Crisis"

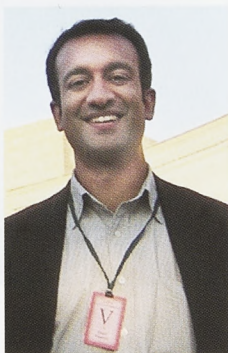
14. The Cornelius Ryan Award

Best nonfiction book on international affairs

RAJIV CHANDRASEKARAN

Alfred A. Knopf
"Imperial Life in the Emerald City:
Inside Iraq's Green Zone"

This is a disturbing story of life inside the walled-off Baghdad enclave that has served as the nerve center of America's occupation of Iraq. The *Washington Post's* Rajiv Chandrasekaran captures the dangerous absurdity of Americans ensconced in their imperial com-



pound. Operating from air conditioned spaces in Saddam's old palaces, comforted by all the amenities of home and protected by the most powerful army on earth, they remained dangerously cut off from the chaotic realities of the country they were supposed to save. By turns tragic and darkly comic, "Imperial Life in the Emerald City" is a stark reminder of how much damage American arrogance and naivete can inflict on the world.

CITATION

LAWRENCE WRIGHT

Alfred A. Knopf

"The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11"

15. The Madeline Dane Ross Award

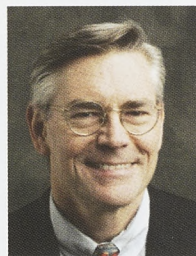
Best international reporting in the print medium showing a concern for the human condition

CELIA W. DUGGER and

DONALD G. McNEIL, JR.

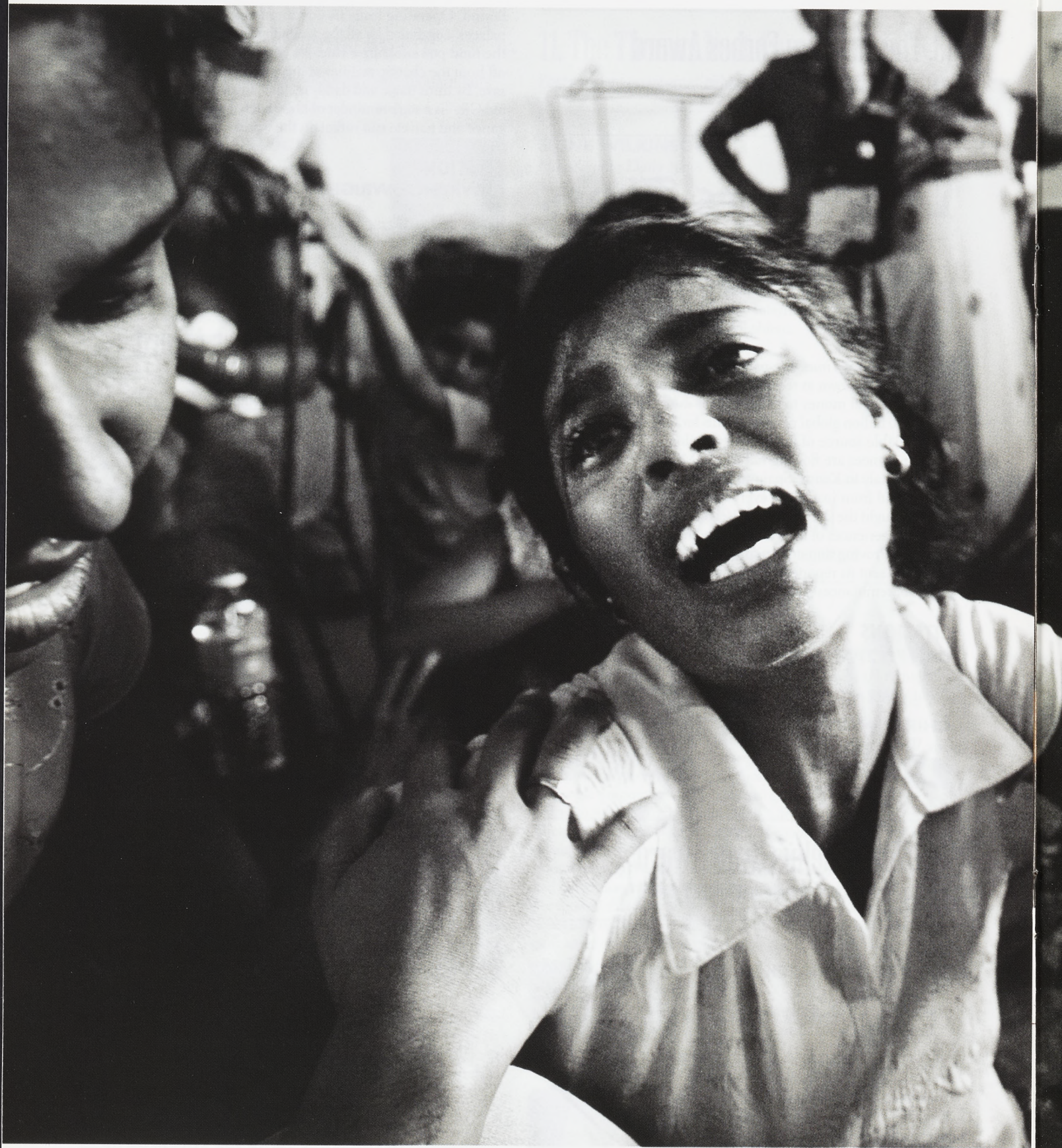
The New York Times

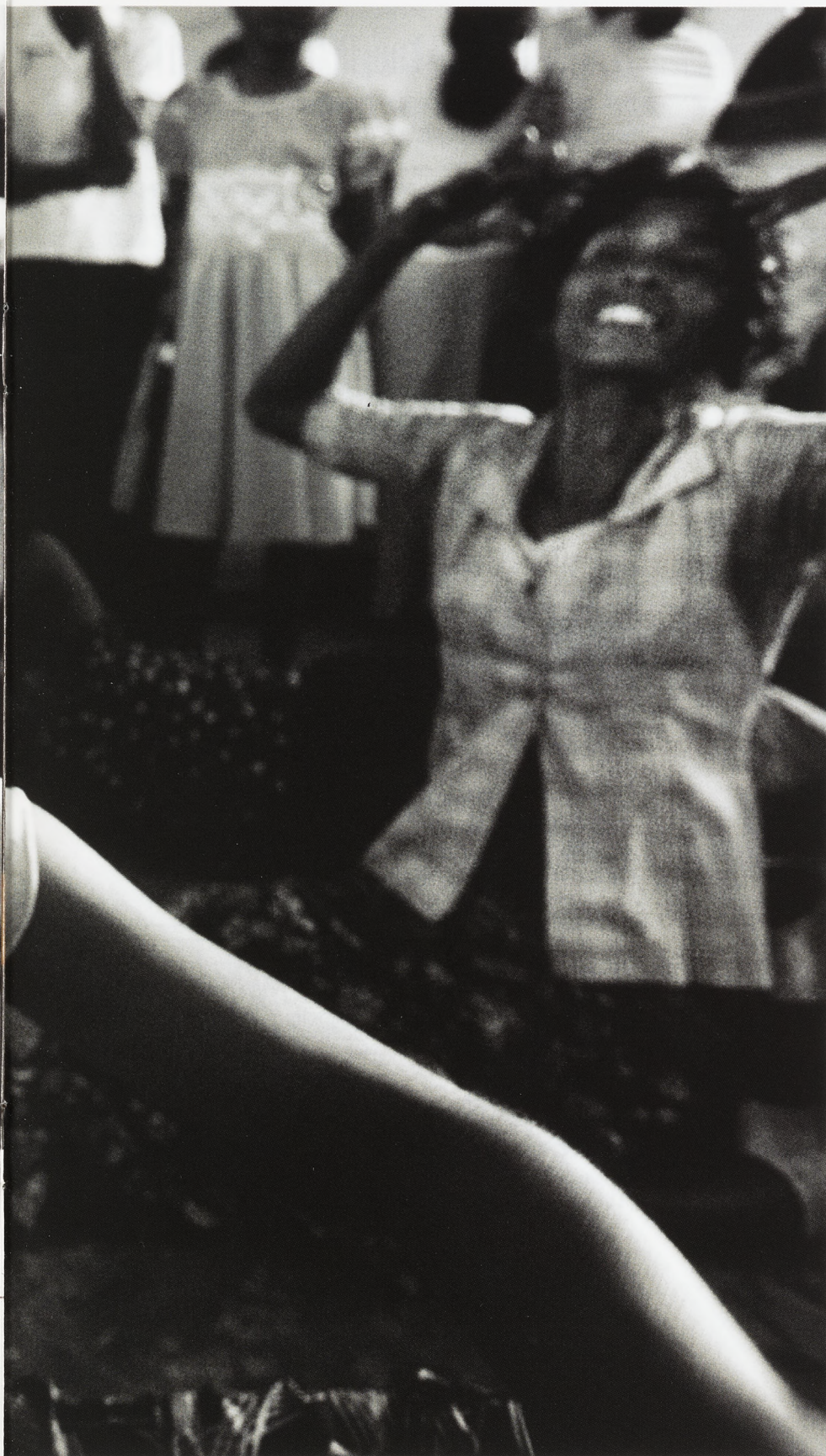
"Diseases on the Brink"



These vivid reports combined poignant personal reporting and comprehensive investigation of medical, cultural and political realities to point up serious Third World health problems that could be eliminated with just a bit more understanding and effort, which the series itself helped to generate. The writers traveled to India, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Haiti, Nepal, Kazakhstan and Ghana highlighting the horrors left behind by such diseases as lymphatic filariasis, blinding trachoma, measles, polio, and guinea worm – ailments that no longer trouble the developed world, but persist in poor regions.

ANNUAL AWARDS





Q.SAKAMAKI

THE OLIVIER REBBOT AWARD

REDUX - NEWSWEEK

"SRI LANKA: WAR WITHOUT END"

Sinhalese family members grieve before a mass burial for the victims attacked on a bus that killed more than 64 people on June 15, 2006. The Sri Lankan government accused Tamil rebels of the terror, but the Tamil political organization denied it.

ANNUAL AWARDS

16. The Carl Spielvogel Award

Best international reporting in the broadcast media showing a concern for the human condition

JON ALPERT and MATTHEW O'NEILL

Downtown Community Television Center / HBO
"Baghdad ER"



This extraordinary piece of cinema verité puts flesh and blood on the grim casualty statistics of the Iraq War. By following wounded American soldiers and Iraqi civilians as they are brought into the 86th Combat Support Hospital for treatment, it depicts, without editorializing, the horror of war and the heroism of the ordinary men and women who confront it on a daily basis.

CITATIONS

MICHAEL SULLIVAN, LETHI MINH HANH, TED CLARK

National Public Radio
"Wartime Diary Touches Vietnamese"

STEPHEN SEGALLER, PAMELA HOGAN, JUDY KATZ, TAMARA ROSENBERG

Thirteen/WNET New York
"Wide Angle: Back to School"

17. The Joe And Laurie Dine Award

Best international reporting in any medium dealing with human rights

STEPHEN GREY

St. Martin's Press

"Ghost Plane: The True Story of the CIA Torture Program"



Stephen Grey's "Ghost Plane" is the consummation of years of investigation, not only by the author, but, as he acknowledges, the informal global network of journalists with whom he collaborated to reveal the murky world of rendition, extraordinary rendition and proxy torture. By tracing the landings and takeoffs of clumsily concealed CIA flights, his work not only demonstrates concerned investigative journalism in action, it lifts the lid on a global gulag of prisons and torture chambers, assembled by US officials in defiance of domestic and international human rights law. It caused a furor in Europe, and should here.

CITATION

MATTHEW McALLESTER

Newsday

"Bosnia War Criminals in the USA"

18. The Whitman Bassow Award

Best reporting in any medium on international environmental issues

EVAN OSNOS

Chicago Tribune

"The Price We Pay for China's Boom"



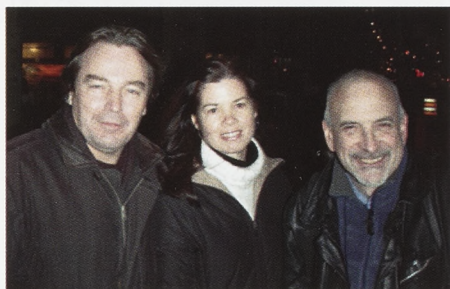
Osnos and his *Chicago Tribune* reporting team made the familiar story of China's environmental devastation immediate for North American readers. The unprecedented quality of the entries for the Bassow Award suggests that 2006 was the year journalists learned to tell the fantastically complex story of climate change with verve and cogent analysis. Evan Osnos and the *Tribune* team exhibited those qualities in abundance.

19. The Robert Spiers Benjamin Award

Best reporting in any medium on Latin America

PAMELA YATES, PETER KINOY, PACO de ONÍS

Skylight Pictures – The History Channel en español
“State of Fear”



A chilling recounting of the decades that Peruvians suffered under threat from the terrorist group Sendero Luminoso and then from their own governments' counter-terrorism repression is told through the eyes and ears of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as well as a society photographer who documented the atrocities. Sobering first person stories and archival footage show how the country became convulsed with fear. It is a cautionary tale about terrorism as Peruvians fight to restore democracy and its rule of law and learn whom to trust.

CITATION

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL STAFF

The Wall Street Journal
“Cuba’s Looming Change”

20. Website Award

Best web coverage of international affairs

Los Angeles Times

STAFF OF THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

Los Angeles Times
“Altered Oceans”

These five well-reported stories, beautifully complemented by interactive graphics, crisp photography, and video reports tailored for the Web rather than television viewers, bring to light a crisis in the world’s oceans. Using California’s fragile coastline as a jumping off point, the series ties together recent global data on coral reefs, water temperature and fish stocks, into a jarring report on a serious threat to sea life, and in turn, to life on the rest of the planet. In reports from Australia’s Great Barrier Reef, and from the tiny Pacific atoll of Midway Island, the editorial team explains the complex chemical and biological factors dri-

ving many species of aquatic plants and animals toward extinction. The framing, pace and tone of the video reports, the direct relevance of interactive features, and the urgent but not hyperbolic tone of the text stories provided a mix that was truly made for online media.

CITATION

KEVIN SITES IN THE HOT ZONE

Yahoo News
“Mideast Crisis”

21. The Artyom Borovik Award

For outstanding reporting by a Russian journalist who displays courage, insight, and independence of thought

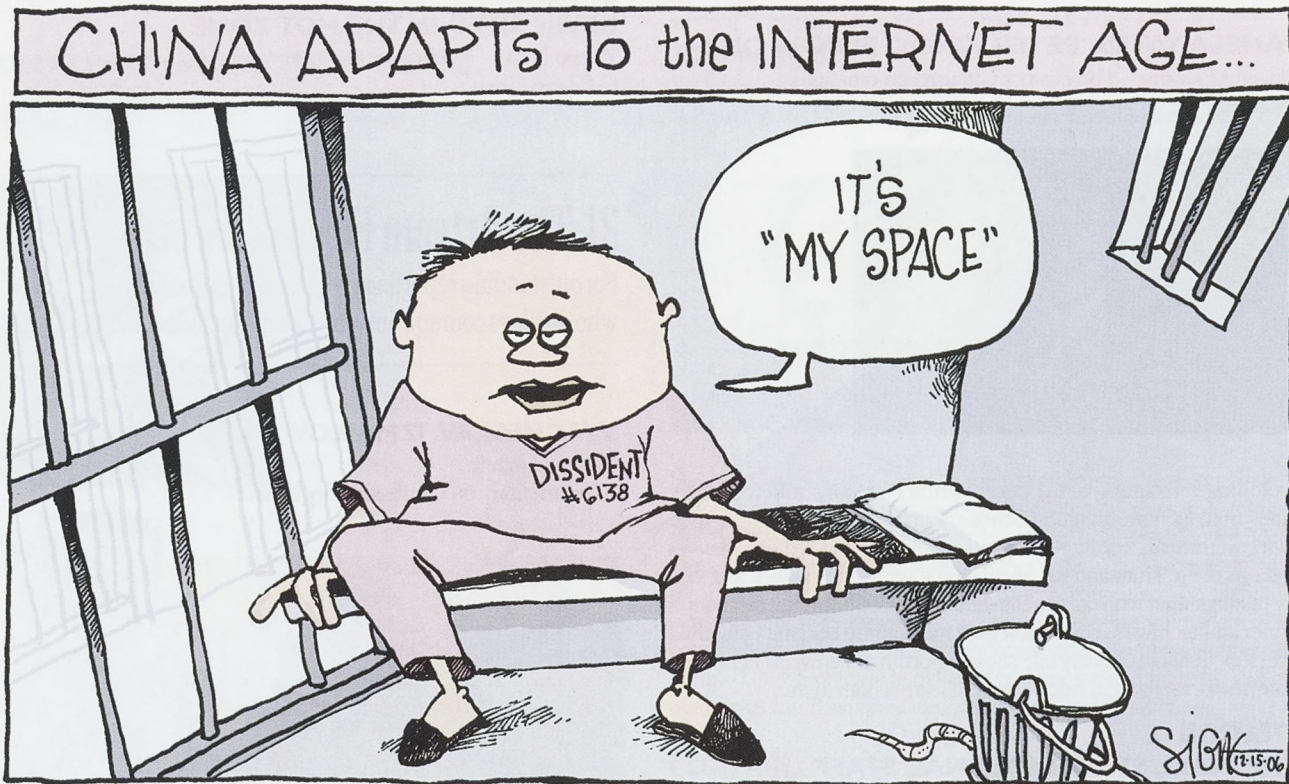
VYACHESLAV IZMAILOV

Novaya Gazeta
“Commentary on Contemporary Russia”



During the Soviet war in Afghanistan, Major Izmailov commanded a battalion. Now a reporter for one of Russia’s last bastions of the free press, the Moscow newspaper, *Novaya Gazeta*, Izmailov has written an authoritative column on Russian military affairs. No mere commentator, Izmailov, a longtime colleague of the late Anna Politkovskaya, is part independent analyst, part human rights mediator, and at least two parts muckraker in the tradition of Seymour Hersh. His 2006 columns typify the Izmailov style: each is an unflinching examination of malfeasance in the armed forces, be it corruption at the highest levels, hazing of recruits, or alleged war crimes in the ongoing conflict, now in its thirteenth year, in Chechnya.

SIGNE WILKINSON
THE THOMAS NAST AWARD
PHILADELPHIA DAILY NEWS





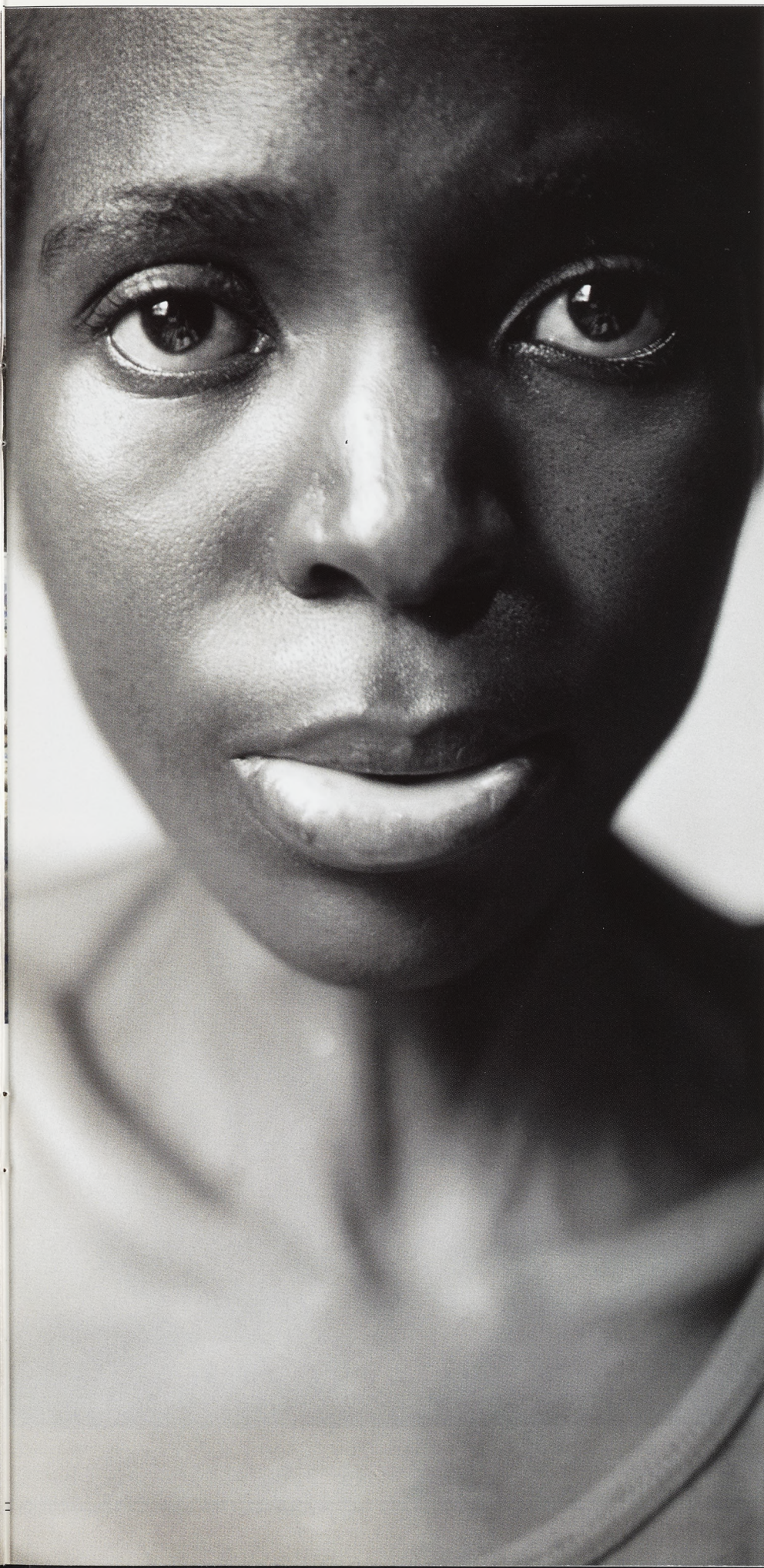
KEVIN (KAL) KALLAUGHER
THE THOMAS NAST CITATION

THE ECONOMIST



ANNUAL AWARDS





KRISTEN ASHBURN

THE JOHN FABER AWARD

CONTACT PRESS IMAGES -
LOS ANGELES TIMES

"THE AFRICAN SCOURGE"

An HIV-positive nurse in Mbvuku,
Harare, Zimbabwe.

"At first, it was difficult to grasp that
35% of that beautiful country's population
is HIV-positive; every week, 3000 people
die from AIDS-related illnesses.

In nearly every Zimbabwe home,
someone is sick or dying of AIDS."

ANNUAL AWARDS





FARAH NOSH

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD

GETTY IMAGES - TIME MAGAZINE
"THE OTHER SIDE OF WAR"

Canadian-Iraqi photographer Nosh documented the life of her own extended family in Baghdad — eating, talking, living. But violence does intrude: a bomb explodes outside, killing an Iraqi soldier and sending shards of glass into their bedrooms. The family gathers at a window to try to see what happened.

Award Sponsors & Judges

AT&T

HAL BOYLE AWARD

William J. Holstein, business journalist and author; Robert Friedman, *Fortune*; Martin Giles, *The Economist*; Jack Willoughby, *Barron's*

BOB CONSIDINE AWARD

Robert Dowling, *BusinessWeek* (retired); Pete Engardio, *BusinessWeek*; Josh Landis, ABC News; Maggie Murphy, *Life*

TIME & LIFE MAGAZINES

ROBERT CAPA GOLD MEDAL AWARD

James Wellford, *Newsweek*; Elizabeth Biondi, *The New Yorker*; Nadja Masri, German GEO; MaryAnne Golon, *Time*; Teru Kuwayama, photographer; Santiago Lyon, Associated Press; Olivier Picard, National Geographic Books; Robert Pledge, Contact Press Images; Rosanna Sguera, *Vanity Fair*; Aiden Sullivan, Getty Images; Scott Thode, *Fortune*

NEWSWEEK

OLIVIER REBBOT AWARD

James Wellford, *Newsweek*; Elizabeth Biondi, *The New Yorker*; Nadja Masri, German GEO; MaryAnne Golon, *Time*; Teru Kuwayama, photographer; Santiago Lyon, Associated Press; Michelle McNally, *The New York Times*; Olivier Picard, National Geographic Books; Robert Pledge, Contact Press Images; Rosanna Sguera, *Vanity Fair*; Aiden Sullivan, Getty Images; Scott Thode, *Fortune*

THE COCA-COLA COMPANY

JOHN FABER AWARD

James Wellford, *Newsweek*; Elizabeth Biondi, *The New Yorker*; Nadja Masri, German GEO; MaryAnne Golon, *Time*; Teru Kuwayama, photographer; Santiago Lyon, Associated Press; Michelle McNally, *The New York Times*; Olivier Picard, National Geographic Books; Rosanna Sguera, *Vanity Fair*; Aiden Sullivan, Getty Images; Scott Thode, *Fortune*

CYMA RUBIN-BUSINESS OF ENTERTAINMENT

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

James Wellford, *Newsweek*; Elizabeth Biondi, *The New Yorker*; Nadja Masri, German GEO; Teru Kuwayama, photographer; Michelle McNally, *The New York Times*; Olivier Picard, National Geographic Books; Robert Pledge, Contact Press Images; Rosanna Sguera, *Vanity Fair*; Scott Thode, *Fortune*

SIEMENS CORPORATION

LOWELL THOMAS AWARD

Arlene Getz, *Newsweek*; Jennifer Bensko Ha,



Story Worldwide; Sean O'Murchu, MSNBC.com

VERIZON

DAVID KAPLAN AWARD

Janice Castro, Medill School of Journalism; Ava Greenwell, Medill School of Journalism; Dan Kraemer, WBBM - CBS in Chicago; Mark LaMet, freelance investigative broadcast journalist; Timothy McNulty, *Chicago Tribune*; Alex Perez, WMAQ - NBC in Chicago; Jon Petrovich, Medill School of Journalism

CBS

EDWARD R. MURROW AWARD

Patricia Kranz, *BusinessWeek*; Jacqueline Frank, independent film and broadcast producer; Barbara Rudolph, *The Deal*; Betsy West, Columbia School of Journalism

FORD MOTOR COMPANY

ED CUNNINGHAM AWARD

John Corporon, WPIX (retired); Marvin Scott, WPIX; Scott Veale, *The New York Times*

THOMAS NAST AWARD

Leah Nathans Spiro, McGraw-Hill; Michael Bullerdick, *American Media*; Judith Dobrzynski, freelance journalist; Jon Elsen, *The New York Times*; Matt Winkler, *Bloomberg News*

COMMUNICATIONS & NETWORK CONSULTING (CNC)

MORTON FRANK AWARD

Allan Dodds Frank, *Bloomberg*; Walt Bogdanich, *The New York Times*; Richard Greenberg, Dateline NBC; Betsy Stark, ABC News

FORBES MAGAZINE

MALCOLM FORBES AWARD

Marcy McGinnis, Broadcast Journalism at Stony Brook University; Karen Curry, Mochila; Camilla Webster, *The Wall Street Journal*

MORGAN STANLEY

CORNELIUS RYAN AWARD

Chris Power, *BusinessWeek*; Kerry Smith, ABC News; Robert Teitelman, *The Deal*; Craig Whitney, *The New York Times*

MADELINE DANE ROSS FUND

MADELINE DANE ROSS AWARD

David Alpern, *Newsweek-on-Air*; Neil Hickey, *Columbia Journalism Review*; Anne Hollister, *Life Magazine* (retired); Stephen Schlesinger, *World Policy Journal*; Suzanne Thompson, Coronado Consultants

A SUPPORTER OF THE OPC

CARL SPIELVOGEL AWARD

Alex Taylor, *Fortune*; Lisa Anderson, *Chicago Tribune*; Toni Reinhold, Reuters; Pam Yates, Skyline Pictures

PHILIP DINE

JOE AND LAURIE DINE AWARD

Ian Williams, *The Nation*; Tala Dowlathahi, Reporters Without Borders; David Rohde, *The New York Times*; Mark Seddon, *Al-Jazeera International*

AT&T

WHITMAN BASSOW AWARD

Kevin McDermott, Collective Intelligence; Susan Hassler, *IEEE Spectrum* magazine; Emily Smith, author/consultant

PEOPLE en ESPAÑOL

ROBERT SPIERS BENJAMIN AWARD

Ann Charters, *Off-the-Record* (Foreign Policy Association); Calvin Sims, *The New York Times*; Tom Trebat, Columbia School of Journalism

CFR.ORG (COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS)

WEBSITE AWARD

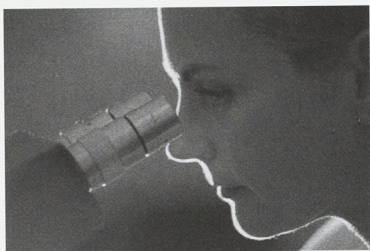
Michael Moran; cfr.org (Council on Foreign Relations); Joan Connell, thenation.com; Sree Sreenivasan, Columbia School of Journalism

CBS

ARTYOM BOROVNIK AWARD

In Moscow: Svetlana Berdnikova, CBS; Alexsei Kuznetsov, CBS; Greg White, *The Wall Street Journal* In New York: Jonathan Sanders, New Sandhouse Productions; Beth Knobel, Fordham University; Andrew Meier, author/journalist

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A Forceful Advocate for Human Rights

A reporter who knew murdered Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya regrets that too few of her countrymen care as deeply about Vladimir Putin's abuse of power and intimidation of the press.

BY OWEN MATTHEWS

Newsweek

I first met Anna Politkovskaya in the final days of the siege of Grozny in April 2000, as a mighty firestorm of Russian artillery roared overhead and the rebel city burned around us. I was standing with a small group of Russian journalists in a street in Staromromislovsky Rayon, a northern suburb of the city that had been abandoned by the rebels days before. The Russian journalists had arrived with a Federal Security Service escort; I had made my own way there by hitching a lift with Belsan Gantemirov and his pro-Moscow group of Chechen fighters.

Beyond the ragged Russian front lines the city was obscured in a drifting pall of bitter-tasting gun smoke, and the bombardment was so overwhelming that it was like a physical presence. You could feel it thunder under your feet like giant doors slamming deep in the earth.

Down the street came a group of Chechen women, led by a middle-aged lady who was no better dressed than the others. She held her head

with a striking confidence, however, as she marched up to the journalists' senior escorting officer, a pig-faced colonel of the Federal Security Service, or FSB. She began to remonstrate with the officer, who quickly wilted and began spreading his palms in a gesture of placation and helplessness. With a snort, she moved on to Gantemirov, the senior Chechen present, shook his hand firmly and began to berate him.

"These women say that their sons were taken not by the Federals [Russians] but by your men," she said. "Here are their names. Will you investigate this?"

Gantemirov was a man of war, a powerfully built village kid with a hard, expressionless face. Years of killing—first on the rebel side, now on Moscow's—seemed to have stripped away all traces of human softness from the man. Yet this bold woman, in her muddy calf boots, long Chechen-style skirt and cheap anorak, seemed to hold his attention. Quietly but force-

fully, she brushed aside his protests that he could do nothing about the missing boys.

"This is in your power," she insisted. "These are your countrymen, and they are innocent of any crime. You must find out what happened to them. This is your duty. It is your obligation."

The woman was Anna Politkovskaya. As usual she was traveling alone, risking kidnap and violence from both sides, staying with ordinary Chechen families, dressing like a Chechen to keep a low profile. And as she traveled, she wrote in meticulous detail about the abuses the Russian authorities and their Chechen allies meted out on the people of Chechnya.

Her articles in *Novaya Gazeta* were often difficult reading: a dismal chronicle of brutality, theft and murder, meticulously reported and set out with little polemic. The facts spoke for themselves, and the facts—so radically far from the Kremlin-organized spin campaign that asserted Chechnya was being liberated and "constitutional or-



der established"—horrified those Russians who had hoped that the fall of Communism had put an end to the brutal instincts of the country's rulers.

It was Anna Politkovskaya's tragedy that in the wake of the Chechen war, fewer and fewer of her countrymen cared about abuses of power—in Chechnya, the North Caucasus, or even by the police and the FSB all over Russia. As Vladimir Putin's power rose, the parameters of tolerated dissent narrowed, and with it the number of people who cared to read about the rottenness of the security state Putin had created.

Speaking after Politkovskaya's murder last October, Putin said that her influence on Russian political life was "very minor. She was known among journalists and in human rights circles and in the West, but I repeat that she had no influence on political life."

Putin was callous, but right. Politkovskaya was honored in the West for her brave reporting, winning awards from the Overseas Press Club, Amnesty International Global and PEN USA, to

name but a few. But in Russia itself, even as Putin's Kremlin boosted the powers of the FSB, launched state-sanctioned pogroms against ethnic Georgians and installed a notorious warlord to impose a brutal peace in Chechnya, she was increasingly ignored. Outside a small group of old democrats in Moscow and St. Petersburg, most Russians preferred to lap up the syrupy media message of Soviet nostalgia, national pride and military glorification the country's state-controlled television and newspapers serve up daily.

The faces of Politkovskaya's killers were caught on grainy CCTV footage. The trigger man, who waited outside her apartment with a 9mm Makarov pistol and shot her in the face as she came out of her elevator, was a nondescript young fellow in a baseball cap, who had a young female accomplice. Though Putin declared that the killers "must be brought to justice," the investigation seems to have gotten nowhere—just like the investigations into so many extra-judicial killings that

Politkovskaya herself brought to light. Who was really responsible for her death is unclear, and will probably remain so.

Did Putin have her killed? The hidden message of Putin's comments on Politkovskaya's political insignificance was that the Kremlin had no reason to kill someone who was no threat to them. But the fact that she was murdered on Putin's birthday could indicate that her death was a kind of macabre gift to the president, either from pro-Moscow Chechens or the security services.

Politkovskaya had made no shortage of enemies among the military, police and FSB over the years by exposing their criminal scams and abuse of power. When she died she was writing a story about torture and kidnapping by forces under the command of Ramzan Kadyrov, the warlord installed by Moscow as Chechnya's president. Other sworn enemies included three officers from the Khanty-Mansiisk Omon, a paramilitary police unit, who were tried

The advertisement features a collage of various newspaper front pages from the Houston Chronicle, including headlines like "TEXAS' REYES TO LEAD INTELLIGENCE PANEL", "Extremist landscape in Egypt is where violence takes hold", "CALDERO TO ROUGH ENOUGH", "A SYSTEM IN CRISIS", "ISRAELI RAID MOVES TRUCE TO THE BRINK", "U.S. playing favorites in Nicaraguan election", and "Raid frees inmate in Iraq". Below the collage are three black and white portraits of bureau chiefs:

- Dudley Althaus**
Mexico City Bureau Chief
- Gregory Katz**
Middle East and Europe Bureau Chief
- John Otis**
South America Bureau Chief

At the bottom, the text reads: **Bringing the world closer, one story at a time.** Below this is the **HOUSTON CHRONICLE** logo with a star and the website **chron.com**.

after Politkovskaya accused them of murdering Chechen civilians in Grozny in 2000. Two fled, and the third mysteriously escaped from police custody after being convicted. Politkovskaya left Russia for Vienna for several months in 2001 after receiving death threats apparently linked to the Omon trial. The Omon officers were named as official suspects by the Prosecutor General's office.

Whoever the true culprit is, there is little doubt that Vladimir Putin bears a heavy moral responsibility for Politkovskaya's death. During his seven years in power, he has systematically dismantled the free press, pushing it to the very margins of society. More dangerously, he has created an atmosphere where any criticism of the state is branded unpatriotic. By the criteria of

Putin's Russia, Politkovskaya was not just a critic but a traitor. That marks a fundamental shift. Once, in the days of Glasnost, when Politkovskaya began her crusading career, the patriots were those journalists who exposed the corruption of the regime and uncovered the bloodshed and lies that had lain buried for so long.

Soviet power could not withstand the assault of free speech that Glasnost released. It was people like Politkovskaya who helped her people know the truth about their rulers, and that truth made Russia free.

Politkovskaya, for all the horrors that she had witnessed and documented, never lost hope that the freedom of speech that had flourished, however briefly and imperfectly, under Boris Yeltsin, could transform Russia into a

truly open society. "I wouldn't ever want to say it would take generations," Politkovskaya told an interviewer in 2004. "I want to be able to live the life of a human being, where every individual is respected, in my lifetime."

Her mission was to force Russians to confront hard facts and, more, to force them to understand that it was in their power to do something about them. Their fellow countrymen were suffering, and it was every citizen's duty, indeed his obligation, to protest. Politkovskaya's personal mission was cut cruelly short. It's Russia's tragedy that the number of people willing to continue her fight dwindles every day. **OPC**

Owen Matthews is Moscow Bureau Chief for Newsweek.

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A Bad Year For Free Expression in Free Societies

Annual Report of the Overseas Press Club's Freedom of the Press Committee

BY KEVIN MCDERMOTT

Co-chair

One day last year I was interviewed by the Swedish Broadcasting Service on the subject of press freedom in the United States. In the last several years, especially since the start of the war against Iraq in 2003, the club has often complained to U.S. officials on behalf of journalists denied legal protection.

Video blogger Josh Wolf, for example, was jailed last September for refusing to turn over his unedited video of a July 2005 demonstration in San Francisco in which a police car was damaged; he is still in prison as we go to press.

Mark Fainaru-Wada and Lance Williams only barely escaped jail for refusing to disclose the sources for their sensational coverage of steroid abuse by professional athletes in *The San Francisco Chronicle*. Meanwhile, the White House angrily criticized reporting on the secret monitoring of overseas phone calls and financial transactions by American citizens. And last spring two reporters for ABC News—Brian Ross and Richard Esposito—reported that a senior federal law-enforcement official tipped them that the Department of Justice was monitor-

ing their phone calls in the hunt for confidential sources. Staffers at *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, Ross and Esposito reported, were also under surveillance.

So when the Swedes called I was glad to talk.

"Can you comment," the interviewer began, switching on her tape recorder, "on repression of journalists in the United States at the moment?" Even allowing for the cartoon colors in which some Europeans view what goes on in America, her question seemed a reach.

Repression? Repression is what happened to George Vigo and his wife, Mazel, two Philippine journalists shot down last spring by men on motorcycles, who then sped off and escaped. Repression is what happened to Julio Balza, a Venezuelan journalist for *El Pais Nuevo*, accused of defamation last July by the minister of infrastructure. Balza had reported on structural faults in a viaduct connecting the state of Vargas with Caracas shortly after a companion bridge collapsed.

Repression is what happened to Kalshan al-Bayati, a correspondent for *Al-Hayat*, when she was arrested and held

without charge twice in one month by Iraqi government officials. Al-Bayati was freed each time, but not before confiscation of her personal computer, notes, and identification papers. And she was forbidden to leave the country.

What irritated me about my interview with Sveriges Radio was that, while the issues for journalists in the United States are genuinely serious, they cannot be conflated with the literally life-and-death working conditions of our colleagues elsewhere in the world. What irritated me further, on reflection, was that every example I've cited so far took place in an indisputably democratic country.

The collapse of press freedom in Russia under the democratically elected Vladimir I. Putin is well known. (Read about its apotheosis in the account of Anna Politkovskaya's brutal killing on p. 46.) Less remarked in the wider world is the desperate plunge of the Philippines since the election of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo as president in 2001. Just between the middle of May and the end of July last year five journalists, including the Vigos, were murdered in the Philippines.



MANILA: Philippine journalists release doves as part of a protest against a rash of murders that has made the country the most dangerous for media workers outside a war zone.

PHOTO BY JAY DIRECTO/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

What the killings, more properly called assassinations, had in common was that the reporters involved had written critically of local politicians and the drug trade. As OPC's press freedom committee remarked in a letter of protest to President Arroyo, the Philippines is now the most dangerous country for journalists outside of a war zone. Three months later nine reporters with the English-language journal *Malaya* were arrested in connection with a criminal-libel suit filed by José Miguel Arroyo, the president's husband, who objected to reports that he may have tampered with elections in 2004.

According to the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, by the end of 2006 José Arroyo had filed criminal-libel complaints against 43 journalists who crossed him.

In this hemisphere Venezuela and Mexico have, like the Philippines, descended abruptly into danger for working journalists. Between May and July,

Arbitrary arrests, illegitimate detentions and unlawful searches by U.S. troops are all too frequent for journalists working in Iraq

for example, the OPC press freedom committee complained directly to President Hugo Chávez three times about the persecution of journalists in Venezuela. In addition to the slander suit against Julio Balza of *El País Nuevo*, Henry Crespo of *Las Verdades de Miguel* was convicted of criminal defamation after reporting on government corruption and violations of hu-

man rights in the state of Guarico. The suit was brought against him by the governor of Guarico, Eduardo Manuitt. Crespo received an 18-month suspended jail term.

Meanwhile, the Bolívar State legislature of Venezuela allowed the eviction of the *Correro del Caroni* newspaper and demolition of its plant on a pretext of illegal occupancy. The newspaper had provoked the ire of the state governor, Francisco Rangel Gómez, who accused it of waging "state terrorism" by publishing reports critical of the local government.

In frank language, the OPC Committee told President Chávez that the actions of his government "give the lie to your language of respect and support for the democratic global covenant concerning human and civil rights, among which are freedom of speech and of the media. These instances of persecution of journalists are becoming notorious." In January, 2007, Chávez and his United



BAGHDAD: ITN's Terry Lloyd was one of the Iraq war's early victims. (top)

PHOTO BY ITN / GETTY IMAGES

MINDANAO: Neighbors carry the body of Philippine newspaper editor Hernani Pastolero, shot in February by a pair of gunmen who escaped on motorcycles. (above)

PHOTO BY MARK NAVALES/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Socialist Party of Venezuela were reelected to a powerful new majority.

Mexico has also reelected its ruling party. Shortly before leaving office, outgoing President Vicente Fox established a special prosecutor's office to deal with the spiral of violence against Mexican media. The job of prosecutor David Vega Vera, as Mexico's attorney general

Daniel F. Cabeza de Vaca Hernandez termed it, will be to break "the cycle of impunity" common to a string of murders, assaults and threats.

Our colleagues at the Committee to Protect Journalists counted two murders of journalists in Mexico in 2006, but suspect the number could be as high as eight. It's hard to know the true damage done to

press freedom, since the willingness of criminal gangs to use violence in retaliation for irritating news stories has led to frank self-censorship. El Mañana, for example, began censoring its coverage of organized crime three years ago after the murder of editor Javier Mora García. His successor, Ramón Cantú, said bluntly last year that crime reporting will henceforth be a negligible feature of the paper's editorial coverage.

From here in the United States, one can only imagine what it's like to go to work day after day under such conditions, all the while fighting the cognitive dissonance of knowing that one lives in a democracy. Such courage is a reason to redouble our battle to make the United States an unmistakable center point for free expression. And yet in late November, the OPC press freedom committee found it necessary to remind Donald H. Rumsfeld, shortly before he left his job as secretary of defense, that the unfinished business he was leaving behind in Iraq included the cases of several journalists mistreated and even killed by American occupation forces.

By the end of the year the Committee to Protect Journalists estimated that more than 120 journalists and media support staffers had been killed in Iraq since the war began in March, 2003. At least 17 have been killed by fire from U.S. forces, and some of these cases qualify, finally, as "repression."

Among the most prominent was that of Terry Lloyd of International Television News. Last autumn a British coroner ruled Lloyd's death while covering the fighting in 2003 as an "unlawful killing." According to the International Federation of Journalists, witnesses said Lloyd was shot in the head by American troops as he was being driven to a hospital in an unarmed civilian minibus, having already been wounded in the stomach while covering a firefight between U.S. and Iraqi forces outside Basra.

Arbitrary arrests, illegitimate detentions and unlawful searches by U.S. troops are all too frequent for journalists working in Iraq. In October, for example, Rabiaa Abduhl Wahab and Ali Burhan of Dar Al Salam, a radio station linked to an Islamist party, were

detained because of alleged links to armed groups, though neither the nature of the evidence against them nor the conditions of their detention were made known. Three days before, U.S. troops raided the headquarters of Al Furat, a Shiite-linked TV station. Guards were disarmed, the premises searched and computer material seized, all without a warrant.

Such actions—against media that are sure to broadcast news of their mistreatment far and wide—are damaging not only to America's mission in Iraq but in the world. As the OPC Committee told Rumsfeld, cases like these undermine America's credibility when the country speaks about freedom and the rule of law. It makes it easy for non-Americans to portray the nation in cartoon colors.

THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Depending on who does the counting, between 32 and 64 journalists and media-support staff were killed in Iraq last year. According to Reporters Without Borders, that's about 80 percent of

all deaths in the world that can be attributed to reporting a story or expressing an opinion.

Wars are dangerous, of course, and not all deaths are the consequence of government misconduct. In 2006 the OPC press freedom committee concentrated its energies on the behavior of the occupying forces and on the embryonic legal structures of the new Iraqi government. In an exchange with Prime Minister Nouri Kamal al-Maliki, for example, OPC vigorously objected to such petty but telling tyrannies as a ban on filming members of parliament, the army and police, and even religious festivals. The OPC took—and takes—particular offense at the government's repeated threats to use a 2004 antiterrorism law to shut down media and impose long prison sentences on journalists if their reporting is alleged to incite "violence...sedition and sectarianism." The committee asked al-Maliki to set an example by doing everything in his power to ensure the safety of journalists attempting to provide a full account of the Iraqi conflict to Americans, Iraqis and a watching world.

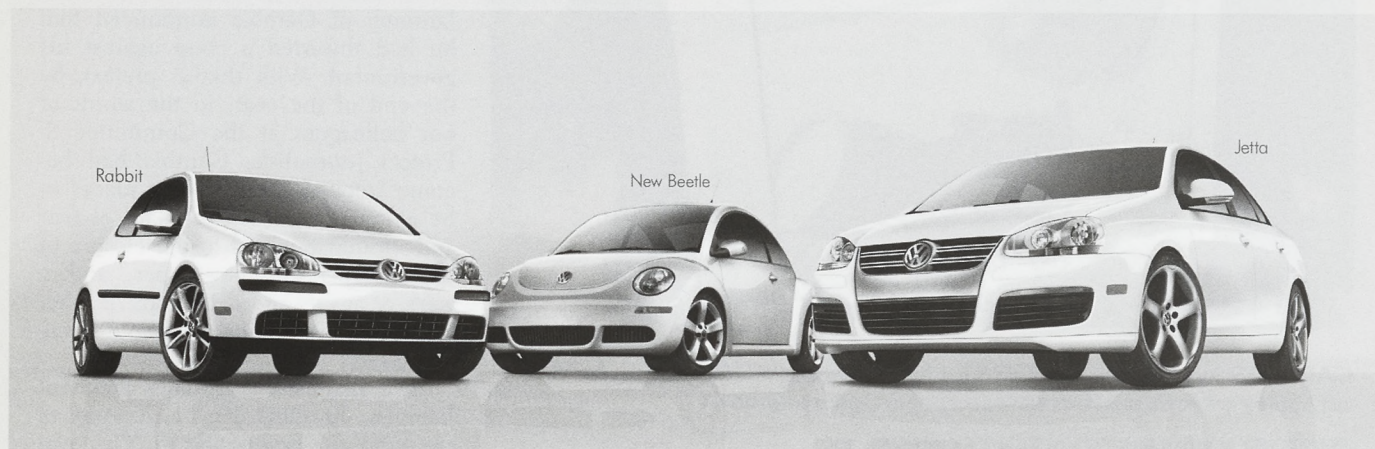
In addition to its work on behalf of

journalists in Iraq, the press freedom committee also took up cases involving reporters and editors in Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen.

ASIA

In its successful bid to host the 2008 Olympics, China made an unprecedented commitment to media freedom. For homegrown Chinese media, however, the situation has deteriorated. Coverage of breaking news was restricted in 2006, and the government forcefully inserted itself into the raucous chat rooms and blogs of China's booming digital media.

Foreign journalists have experienced some loosening of restrictions. Still, in September Singaporean reporter Ching Cheong, a veteran correspondent for *The Straits Times*, was given a five-year sentence on charges of "spying" for Taiwan. After sitting in jail for 18 months, Ching's one-day trial behind closed doors was a travesty that the press freedom committee told President Hu Jintao was "not only deeply unfair to the journalist but also a sign that the



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CARACAS: Jorge Aguirre, a photographer for the newspaper *El Mundo*, was shot dead last April by unknown assailants while covering a downtown protest.

PHOTO BY JUAN BARRETO/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

leaders of China continue to have little respect for the rule of law."

No evidence was presented that Ching committed any crime. On the contrary, authorities were apparently displeased with Ching's efforts to conduct research on the late reformist prime minister, Zhao Ziyang, still a toxic topic 15 years after Zhao was put under house arrest for opposing the 1989 military crackdown in Beijing's Tiananmen Square that resulted in the deaths of hundreds of protesters.

In 2006 the press freedom committee also addressed the mistreatment of colleagues in Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

The dire situation of independent media in Russia is well known. But right next door a discouragingly similar story has unfolded with seeming suddenness in Azerbaijan. At the top

of a long list of recent wrongs brought to the attention of President Ilham Aliyev by the press freedom committee was the case against Sakit Zakhidov, a prominent journalist with *Azadlyg* and a reliable government critic.

In September Zakhidov was sentenced to three years in jail for drug use (the prosecution failed in an earlier attempt to prove that he was selling narcotics). Several physicians whom police claimed found drugs in Zakhidov's system testified in court that they had never tested him, according to Reporters Without Borders. The OPC committee told President Aliyev that the rapid deterioration of respect for free expression in Azerbaijan "only serves to denigrate and intimidate the free press that is a hallmark and requirement of democracy around the world today." But as 2007 began the trend was, if anything, accelerating.

Last year the OPC also helped shine a light on abuses of press freedom in Afghanistan, Armenia, Belarus, Germany, Kazakhstan, Turkey and Uzbekistan.

AFRICA

In March President Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh of Gambia announced that he had thwarted a coup against his government. With that as pretext, by the end of the year, in the words of our colleagues at the Committee to Protect Journalists, Gambia had become "one of Africa's worst places to be a journalist." The climate of fear and intimidation led to the closure of *The Independent* newspaper, and a wave of arrests and detentions of other Gambian journalists without due process.

In a sharp exchange with President Jammeh, the OPC demanded repeal of the oppressive laws against the Gambian media, most notoriously Section 181 of the Criminal Code and the Newspaper Act. Jammeh won reelection in a landslide to a third term in September.


The press freedom committee was also active on behalf of journalists in Gabon, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan and Zimbabwe in 2006.

THE AMERICAS

The United States has always held itself up as an exemplar of liberty. There is no better example than the country's tradition of free expression, which has served the country well in

even the most nervous times. But in June former OPC president Richard B. Stolley went directly to President George W. Bush to protest the administration's attack on *The New York Times* in retaliation for its reporting on secret programs to monitor Americans' overseas telephone calls and financial transactions. Bush and Vice President Richard Cheney called the disclosures "disgraceful," singling out the *Times* "in particular," even though *The Wall Street Journal* and the *Los Angeles Times* had also made headlines with reports about the program.

The issue for the Overseas Press Club of America, Stolley told Bush, was that other news organizations with less prestige, less influence and less well-financed publishers would feel the chilling influence of official criticism and hesitate to publish controversial stories for fear of being called unpatriotic or hauled into court.

In 2006 the OPC press freedom committee also acted on behalf of journalists in Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Guatemala, Mexico and Venezuela. 



SINGAPORE: Ching Cheong, chief China correspondent for *The Straits Times*, was detained in China on charges of espionage.

PHOTO BY AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The co-chairs of the OPC Freedom of the Press Committee are Larry Martz, Kevin McDermott and Norman A. Schorr. Other members of the committee are David Alpern, George Bookman, Bill Collins, Yvonne Dunleavy, Bob Dowling, Dorinda Elliott, Jeremy Main, John Martin, Cait Murphy, Susan Schorr, Kristina Shevory and Jacqueline Albert-Simon, Minky Worden.

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Citizens of the World

Many newspapers have gone radically local, pushing important foreign and national news to page A-10.

BY MIKE HOYT

Columbia Journalism Review

Let's start, for a change, with a "to be sure" paragraph instead of putting it near the end: To be sure, mainstream media are going through what we might gently call a major transition, a period of deep and scary change. The three mainstream network news programs lost another million or so viewers last year, as they've been doing for a few years now. Daily newspaper circulation continued to fall, dropping another 3 percent in 2006, while newspaper advertising—print and online together—fell slightly, down .3 percent. Audiences continue to fragment and it seems that every hour people have more choice about how to spend their media time.

And so, the logic goes, to win them back we need to give readers and viewers more of what they want and less of what we think they need. And we need to cut expenses. Thus, on both counts, foreign news takes a hit. Less Darfur, less AIDS in Africa, fewer angry Middle Eastern folk or South Americans with complicated complaints.

In local newspaper circles, the thinking is that people get their foreign news from TV and the national dailies anyway. So stick to your knitting and give people what they cannot get elsewhere, which is detailed reporting on the home front. The hyperlocal movement is in full swing and, as these things often do, it is swinging too far.

The expense part, of course, is real. *Boston Globe* editor Martin Baron says he had a choice between shutting down bureaus in Jerusalem, Berlin, and Bogotá and giving up "a dozen or so" jobs in the main newsroom. Weighing the loss of a voice like that of Anne Barnard out of Iraq against several city beats was surely no easy choice. Nor can a daily like *The*



Philadelphia Inquirer afford to send people around the world as it once did, as it struggles to stay afloat while investing in a Web site that might give it a purchase on the future. Intangibles like credibility and weight and prestige, all of which count for something with advertisers and readers, don't seem to hold as much weight as all the bad numbers.

Yet the hyperlocal movement is mainly one of emphasis. Most dailies never had original foreign reporting anyway, but put together a report—sometimes a very good report—with wires and stringers. Now many of them are deemphasizing anything that is not strictly local. This includes my own local paper, *The Record*, in northern New Jersey, where the publisher has told the staff he wants to push foreign and national inside and maybe, in a few years, out the door. This in the name of reader interest. Yet not all readers are so parochial. In a recent letter to the editor in *The Record*, a Bill Delaney of Teaneck took note of the paper's shift. "Twenty-five Marines and soldiers were killed over the weekend, and *The Record* puts it on A-10," he wrote. "But a recent story about a 23-acre, three-cow, two-horse farm in Franklin Lakes gets on the front page two times. What's going on?"

What indeed? It is true that readers

respond to local news, as any number of polls demonstrate. One of the big surveys that helped set the localism trend in motion was a careful impact study of some 37,000 news consumers put together in 2001 by the Readership Institute of the Media Management Center at Northwestern University. The idea was to help editors prioritize areas of coverage to focus on. "Easy to read content" and "community announcements, obituaries, ordinary people" scored the highest, with "health, home, food, fashion & travel" next.

However, "government, war, politics, international" followed very close behind those three—and ahead of "police, crime, courts, legal," ahead of "business, economic, personal finance," and (surprise!) ahead of "sports." People want editors to tell them what's significant and interesting both near and far. To paraphrase Sonny Corleone in *The Godfather*, they don't come to the daily paper to get stupid.

And the Readership Institute survey was compiled before September 11, 2001, a day when many an American was baptized as a citizen of the world. Readers are smart enough to know that a religious debate in Saudi Arabia or a disease in Sudan or a business development in China can have a profound impact on their lives and those of their children. Common sense says that good local coverage needs to be balanced with good foreign coverage, done creatively and efficiently, but done well, and not buried or squeezed so much that the rest of the world looks distant and unconnected. Because it is not distant at all, as publishers should remember. **OPC**

Mike Hoyt is executive editor of CJR.



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*Boy seen through a broken windshield in aftermath of a car bombing, Eastern Iraq, 2/07.
Credit: Wissam Al-Okaili/AFP/Getty images*

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